

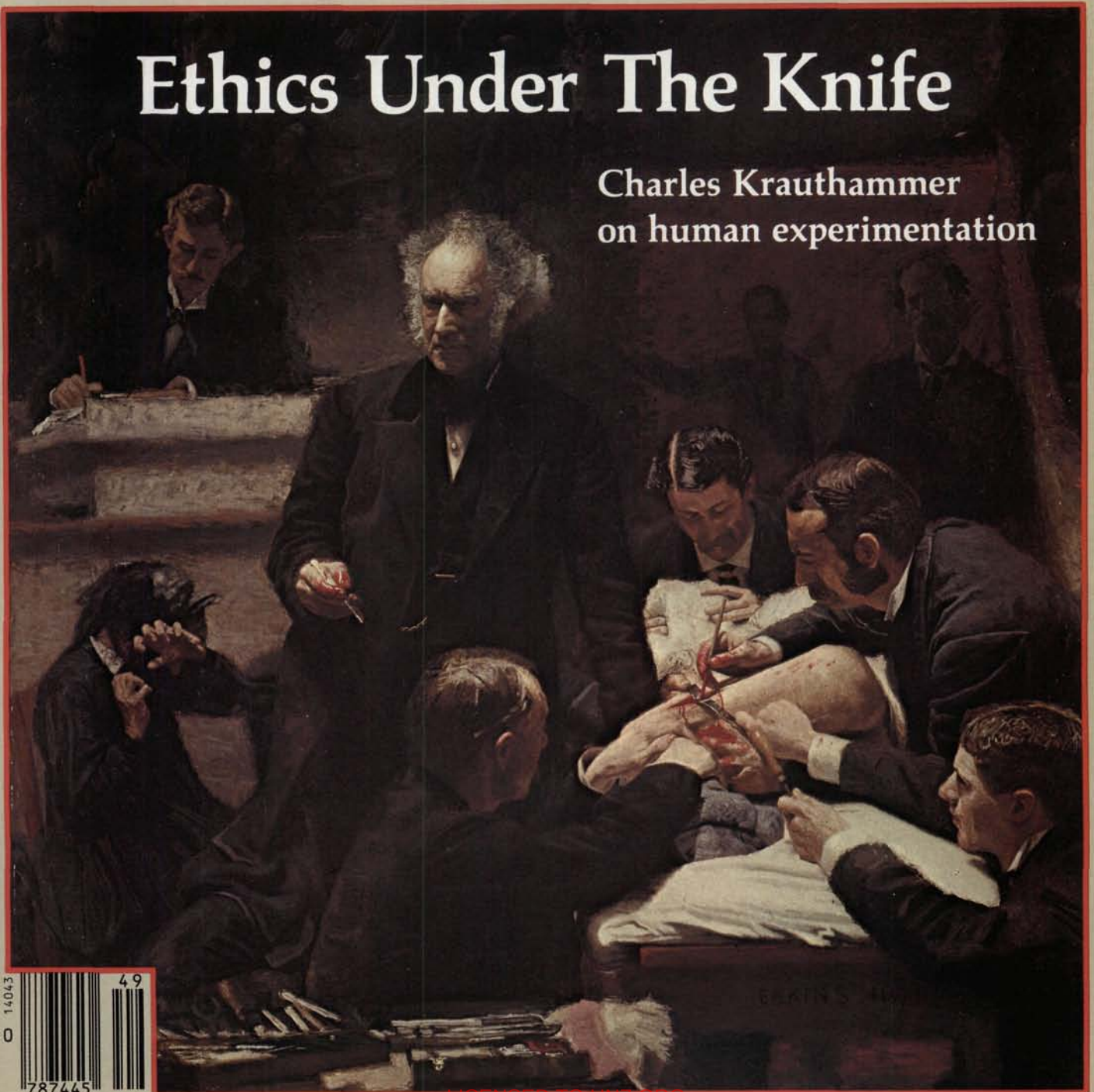
In Praise of Johnny Carson

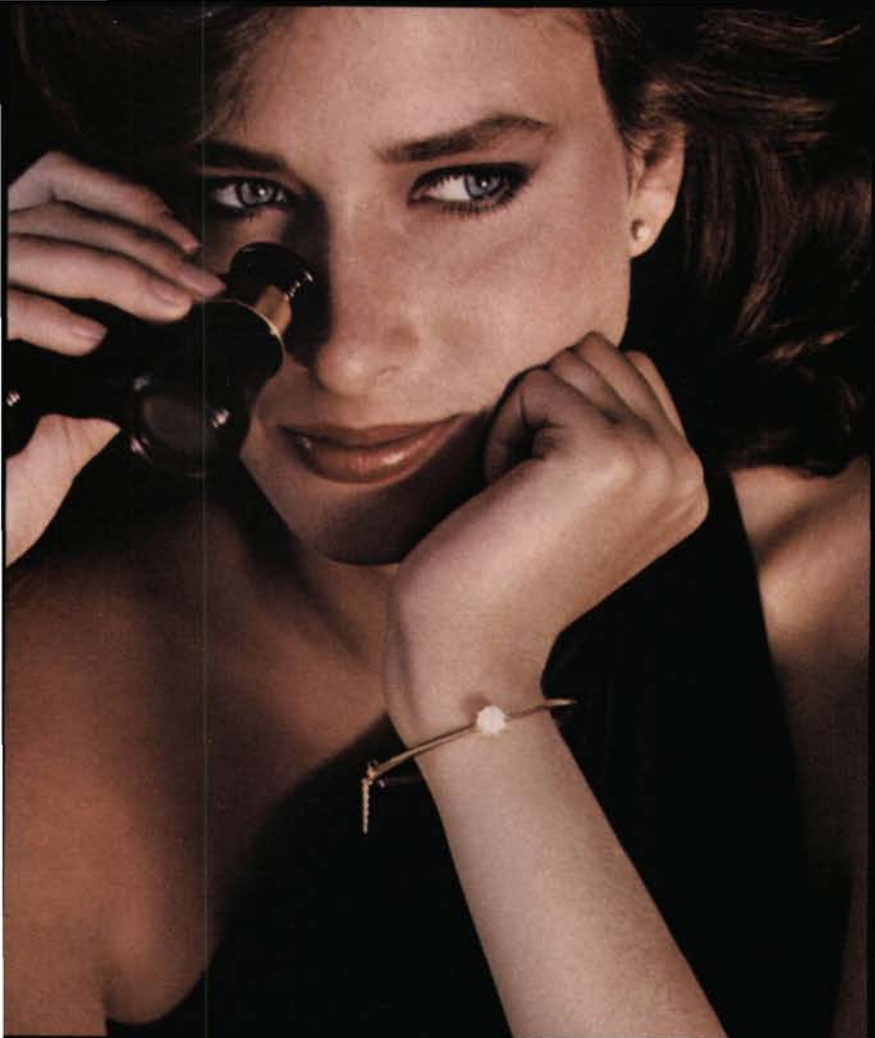
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FROM WASHINGTON

WAGES OF THE ARMS RACE

Oh, those hopeful days in Casa Pacifica! That's where Reagan and Brezhnev met. In private correspondence the two leaders are now rather awkwardly trying to use the June 1973 introduction by President Nixon to establish a personal tone in their communications. "Just as you do, I recall our brief conversation," Brezhnev tells Reagan in an exploratory letter May 25, now published. Brezhnev came to Washington in 1973 to sign peace agreements with Nixon, and Nixon gave him a spanking new Lincoln Continental town car. Then they went to San Clemente and met Governor Reagan. How hopeful they were. They pledged a general permanent treaty to end the nuclear arms race in 1974. (But in 1974 Nixon resigned his office.) The subject, then, as now, was the bomb, and the bomb has grown since then till it almost blots out the sun.

The global arms budget of all countries of all continents is now \$550 billion a year, about \$100 billion of which goes into nuclear weapons. I am quoting from the 1981 seventh annual edition of *World Military and Social Expenditures* (Box 1003, Leesburg, Virginia, \$4). It is by Ruth Leger Sivard, who used to be chief of the economics division of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and who continues the work with her own nonprofit research organization, World Priorities. The point is that the nuclear-military confrontation has gotten so dangerous that something is going to give. Europe's fears, I suspect, are going to leap the Atlantic. Reagan has made the foreign policy speech he should have made ten months ago, the

tone reasonable and low-keyed. "I am listening," he seemed to be saying. He got almost universal praise. Then came negotiations at Bonn and Geneva and elsewhere: they are actually talking. And what do they have to talk about? With a minimum of editorializing, here are some items from the Sivard book.

Arms budgets have risen to \$550 billion annually, which equals the entire annual income of the poorest half of the earth's four billion people. Some 25 million men now serve in the regular armed forces of global armies and 45 million more are in paramilitary service. Thirty of the richest countries export arms, and this amounts to \$25 billion to \$35 billion a year. The hungriest countries seem the best customers. Whereas a tank cost only \$50,000 in World War II, it cost around \$900,000 in 1974, and it is now expected to run as high as \$3 million. Arms growth leads to militarization; military regimes now run 54 countries of the developing world, half of them among the poorest.

And bombs have been getting bigger. This is the scary part. Controversy over whose bomb is pointed at whom seems

fairly meaningless. The Hiroshima bomb is the standard reference. It destroyed a city, with the equivalent of 12,500 tons, or 12.5 kilotons, of TNT. The new bomb isn't measured in kilotons but in megatons, and the yield is equivalent to 10 million to 15 million one-ton trucks filled with TNT. Let's put it specifically. A Poseidon submarine starts out stealthily and carries 16 missiles, each with ten warheads, and each warhead with over three times the explosive force of the single Hiroshima bomb. That adds up to a larger explosive power—mark this—than was used by all the munitions in World War II. It lies perhaps 4,000 miles away at sea and discharges its missiles, and a single salvo can hit and destroy 160 targets. That's more targets than there are cities in the Soviet Union. And one sub represents a very small fraction of the nuclear force available to each of the superpowers.

We all know these things in a way, and they are so disagreeable that we don't think about them, but it seems that now reality is breaking through.

The 1981 *World Military and Social Expenditures*
continued on page 40

DAVID BRODER: "This will be a standard reference"

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

DECEMBER 9, 1981

REAGAN'S OLIVE BRANCH

In tone and substance, President Reagan's first major foreign policy speech was very good indeed. The question is whether the Administration meant what the President said. For 11 months, Administration officials have competed with each other in sounding belligerent (sometimes foolishly so) toward the Soviet Union and its allies. The purpose, Administration officials say, was to reassure the world that the United States had resumed its role as a superpower—that the U.S. was rearming and had the will to resist Soviet expansionism. However, much of the world has been more alarmed than encouraged by the Administration's posturings. Instead of talking softly while fashioning a bigger stick, the Administration often has seemed to be bellowing incoherently—about arming to fight wars in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Central America all at the same time, about “going to the source” against Cuba, about fighting limited nuclear wars and firing nuclear “demonstration” shots (as if a mushroom cloud were a mere whiff of grapeshot).

Almost every such bellicose utterance has been withdrawn or corrected by a subsequent statement or action. Because of budget realities, the Reagan Administration is not going to spend much more money on defense this year than Jimmy Carter planned to spend. The MX missile system Mr. Reagan proposed is only half the size of Mr. Carter's. Each time Alexander Haig threatens war against Cuba or Nicaragua, the White House says it isn't going to happen. Mr. Haig's nuclear shot was disavowed by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, and the whole national security apparatus went to work explaining away the President's gaffe about the feasibility of limiting nuclear wars.

In spite of all the corrections of the record, though, the Reagan Administration was gaining the reputation—especially in Europe—of being menacingly incompe-

tent, as dangerous to its friends as to its enemies. The Reagan Administration is not responsible for creating the European disarmament movement, but it has served to swell the movement's ranks and to cripple the ability of European leaders to deal with it. While Leonid Brezhnev was cooing about peace (even while deploying a new SS-20 rocket against Europe every 10 days), the Reagan Administration inflamed Europe's so-called “nuclear neuralgia.” European leaders themselves are partly to blame for the condition. Nuclear matters there traditionally are discussed and decided in a tight, elite circle of scholars and officials, and not widely shared with parliamentarians or the public. So it appears to masses of unenlightened Europeans that the U.S. is trying to force them to accept a new generation of American nuclear weapons—formerly designated theater nuclear forces, now called intermediate nuclear forces—that might keep a future nuclear conflict confined to Europe and avoid damage to the U.S. homeland. Soviet propaganda has pushed this line. The Administration, until November 8, had done little—certainly very little that was effective—to calm Europe's fears.

Meanwhile, the Administration is almost entirely responsible for the revival of the U.S. disarmament movement, which staged teach-ins on 150 campuses in early November. The Roman Catholic bishops of the U.S., who met in Washington the week of President Reagan's speech, were moved to launch a major study leading to possible pastoral letters on the morality of U.S. nuclear policy.

Mr. Reagan's speech was moderate yet firm in tone and reasonable in substance. It demonstrated that it is possible for a U.S. official to criticize the massive Soviet arms buildup of the past decade and still advocate arms control. The speech was almost unanimously praised by European leaders; indeed, West

German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt claimed credit for inspiring the address even before it was delivered. The Soviets reacted as if stung, and denounced the President's INF proposals as "propaganda" and as "a recipe for unilateral disarmament by the Soviet Union." The Soviets charged that Mr. Reagan had vastly overestimated the size of the Soviet missile arsenal and had underestimated NATO strength. The Brezhnev line is that virtual parity exists in nuclear systems. The truth seems to be that both sides are interpreting the numbers to their own bargaining advantage. The U.S. is not counting 323 British and French nuclear delivery vehicles in calculating the balance, while including 95 SS-20s deployed against China. At the same time, the Soviets are leaving out 980 of their own medium-range bombers and 350 SS-12 missiles, while overstating the number of nuclear-equipped F-4 fighter-bombers in Europe by 100. By any fair evaluation of the numbers, however, the Soviets have the advantage in intermediate-range nuclear warheads. If it's not quite the six-to-one preponderance Mr. Reagan claimed, it's closer to the three-to-one margin calculated by congressional sources. Even Soviet figures add up to a five-to-three advantage. So it's eminently fair that the Reagan Administration should offer not to introduce new INF systems into Europe in return for the dismantling of Soviet systems. Possibly the Soviets ought to be allowed to keep SS-20 missiles in deep Asia as a hedge against the Chinese, but the U.S. has every right to ask as an opening bid in negotiations that they reduce the number of missiles threatening Europe to zero.

The worry is that the Administration really does not want to negotiate, but has made the zero-option offer solely to pacify U.S. and European opinion, and actually hopes the Soviets will reject the proposal and allow INF deployment to go forward without moral onus. Such intentions are denied by the Administration, of course, although officials do acknowledge that the proposal was designed to separate middle-ground Europeans from the peace movement. The Soviets, rejecting Mr. Reagan's plan, have come up with a

counterproposal that is unacceptable to the U.S.—a moratorium on INF deployment in return for partial removal of the SS-20 force. Months or years of wrangling may ensue, during which each side will accuse the other of dragging its feet in order to go ahead with a military buildup. The Administration's problem is that Europe will be all too vulnerable to Soviet arguments. Therefore the Administration needs to do everything it can to ensure that it looks sincere about wanting to reach an agreement. The best way to look sincere is to be sincere.

ANOTHER way to hold the alliance together is to make fair proposals—and progress, if possible—in strategic and conventional arms talks. Mr. Reagan's speech did not contain enough details on these negotiations to make any solid judgments, but there was worrisome language about "creativity" in treaty verification. The Administration is said to be inventing a new gauge of nuclear might, the "lethality index," which would be a combination of warhead accuracy, explosive yield, and numbers of warheads. If the Administration wants a START agreement involving equal levels of lethality, verifying such a pact will involve on-site inspections of the most intrusive kind—inspections the Soviets have been reluctant to permit in the past.

The Administration should be as creative about new methods of controlling arms as about making arms control agreements impossible. One proposal suggested by Larry K. Smith, an aide to Senator Gary Hart of Colorado, is that the Administration initiate talks focusing not just on limitation or reduction of arms but on prevention of their use either by miscalculation or by computer error. Smith would designate the negotiations STOP—strategic talks on prevention—leading to each side's informing the other of its missile tests. The two sides also would work together to prevent nuclear weapons from spreading to the hands of international terrorists.

Finally, it's important that the Reagan Administration maintain perspective about European fears. INF systems were proposed in 1979 to meet a concern that is as old as NATO—that in the event of Soviet attack, the U.S. would not risk its own homeland to save Europe. The purpose of INF—which are U.S. missiles, based in Europe and capable of hitting the Soviet Union—is to ensure that the U.S. could not escape involvement in the event of war. INF is not something the U.S. invented for its own benefit, but to reassure Europe. It serves a similar purpose to the Multilateral Force proposed in 1960 to calm European fears that only the U.S. would decide when nuclear weapons could be used. Soon after MLF came under discussion, the Europeans decided they didn't want it, and the Kennedy Administration gave up the idea without a fuss. INF could be similarly forgone if Europe decided it

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TO OUR READERS

In early September, we quintupled the number of copies of THE NEW REPUBLIC that we distribute on newsstands across the U.S. and Canada. The magazine is being sold in hundreds of places it was never sold before; still, we may be missing some important outlets. If you have any suggestions about specific bookstores, newsstands, supermarkets, or other places that should be selling THE NEW REPUBLIC, please write: Reed Phillips, Circulation Manager, THE NEW REPUBLIC, 1220 19th St., N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20036.

CORRESPONDENCE

LIBERAL VALUES VIOLATED

To the editors:

Robert B. Reich is both perceptive and eloquent in his argument that economics is not simply a matter of measuring aggregates, such as GNP, money supply, and rate of inflation, but a matter of social justice and political commitments ("Beyond Reaganomics," TNR, November 18). And I agree with his conclusion that Reaganomics "will not engage the commitment of all of America." But will a return to the welfare state do so? Is it not true that many of the liberal policies of the last two decades have also violated "the social ideals" of a large majority, including many of those people who have traditionally supported the Democratic Party?

Whatever "justice and decency" mean to most Americans, these concepts do not mean ever-increasing payments to those who do not work at the expense of those who do, court-ordered busing for the children of the poor while its advocates send their children to the schools they choose, and a greater concern for abstract legal traditions while real people are assaulted and murdered every day. Consequently, Reich's argument that we "need an economics that will reaffirm our political life together" would be more convincing if he acknowledged that some of the liberal programs also had the effect of violating, rather than furthering, the liberal values of justice and democracy.

Lawrence W. Hyman
Ridgewood, New Jersey

HUNGARY AND THE WEST

To the editors:

Now that the Polish workers' heroic struggle for freedom has burst the Western business community's bubble of detente, Frank Lipsius of the *Financial Times* in London wants us to turn our eyes to Hungary as a model of economic development in the Communist world ("Hungarian Evolution," TNR, October 21). Of course, Lipsius quotes the state bank and a Central Committee member of the Communist Party to prove his point that Hungary is willing to "Westernize" its economy. But he does not ask Hungarian workers themselves whether or not they think this relation-

ship is worth the deprivation of their freedom. Were Lipsius to read Miklos Harasyti's account of working conditions in Hungary, he would learn that workers have little defense against their state employers and that "the situation of workers is comparable to that of the natives in the first decade of the colonial era." Harasyti was arrested by the regime in 1973 for daring to write a true account of workers' lives.

Perhaps decentralization has helped Hungary's economic development, but it has not allowed the social and economic gains alleged by Lipsius. Neither Hungarian workers nor their Polish counterparts are helped by Western businessmen who coo about the nonexistent gains of Hungary's "evolution."

Eric Chenoweth
Young Social Democrats
New York, New York

FILMS FROM DOWN UNDER

To the editors:

I have been a loyal and devoted reader of Stanley Kauffmann's film criticism for as long as I can remember. But in the case of Peter Weir's *Gallipoli*, I am glad I saw the film before I read his review ("Innocents Abroad," TNR, November 4). This time Kauffmann was dead wrong and more than a little unfair in his verdict.

Kauffmann calls *Gallipoli* "A Young Person's Guide to Grimness." Perhaps it is because I am young and the same age as the main characters that I found the film so affecting. The horrors of the trenches were long before my time but Weir managed to re-create the bloody stupidity and senseless loss of that campaign with a force that wrenched my insides. It wasn't the spectacle that Kauffmann criticized that was the film's strongest point, but the emphasis on the young men who die because of the ambitions of other men.

Hope J. Leman
Corvallis, Oregon

To the editors:

Maybe he goes too far, but Stanley Kauffmann's piece on *Gallipoli* and Australian film in general is perceptive. As an Australian living in the United States, I am always being told by Amer-

icans how wonderful my country's recent films are. I am flattered but I can never quite see what all the fuss is about. Ten years ago at home I went to every new Australian film as a patriotic gesture; now that the industry has "taken off" I can be more selective. Most of these movies have now reached the United States and I've heard nothing but praise.

Kauffmann has restored my faith in American judgment—at some cost to my national pride. (Or were all those other Americans just being polite?) My own untested theory is that Australian films are popular in this country because they provide a change from the local product (which is, after all, pretty woe-ful) without the bother of reading subtitles.

David Stephens
New Haven, Connecticut

SEXTON'S POETRY

To the editors:

Helen Vendler's clear-eyed review of "The Complete Poems: Anne Sexton" ("Malevolent Flippancy," TNR, November 11) was typical of her incisive work. In this time of slippery poetical standards her insistence on maintaining timeless values is refreshing. Vendler's tough but fair criticism left me with a new understanding of Sexton's poetry, its strengths and weaknesses, and, perhaps surprisingly, a new respect for it as well. I am already grateful for Vendler's illuminating criticism of other American poets, particularly Stevens and Lowell. Please make her reviews a regular feature of TNR.

Harry C. Piper III
Excelsior, Minnesota

CRITICISM AND KUDOS

To the editors:

Two comments regarding the November 11 issue of TNR: Terry Krieger, it seems, couldn't quite hack it ("Capital Sex"). He got almost to the end of his magnum opus on the D.C. sex decriminalization bill writing as an enlightened liberal, casting his pity and scorn upon the unwashed with calm assurance. Then something snapped. He showed his willingness to cater to the anti-Bible-

continued on page 40

would rather be protected by submarine-based missiles or in some other way. Ronald Reagan easily understood when his constituents in Nevada and Utah rebelled against placing MX missiles on their territory. He ought to understand the Europeans if they decide they'd rather do without INF. As long as the Europeans want the system, Mr. Reagan should support them. But the last thing a U.S. President should do is to force the allies to take weapons they don't want.

General Shazli, Sadat's archenemy.

PRETENDER TO THE GUN

ON APRIL 7, 1980, the *Guardian* of London published a remarkable interview. David Hirst, the paper's correspondent in the Middle East, had tracked down General Saad el-Shazli, who for some years had been living in exile, mainly in Libya or Algeria, as the self-appointed leader of the Egyptian opposition. To eliminate President Anwar Sadat and take his place had been Shazli's one and only ambition. According to a convention well established by now, a man whose motivation is identical to a lust for absolute power has to be seen to have his special grouping of supporters. So Shazli set up his National Front, a title which always does as well as any. Behind it are perhaps a few score assorted hopefuls, comprising family (his daughter Shahdan operates a company in San Francisco to manage anonymous Arab money and to publish her father's writings), and friends who expect future benefits, and of course the agents from Libya and Syria who mastermind, and pay for, the whole show.

David Hirst asked Shazli what the Front represented. The general replied solemnly, "Everybody from right to left. The front is open to everyone (including, if they asked, the Moslem Brotherhood) who raises the slogan of bringing down Sadat." Once Sadat was murdered, the general added, it would be up to the Egyptians to decide whether they preferred their democracy served up as progressive or conservative—well-done or rare, so to speak. Hirst went on: "You have spoken about your desire to bring down Sadat by democratic means, but at the same time acknowledged the impossibility of this, referring to the need for revolutionary violence. Could you elaborate?" Shazli: "I think the word is clear enough. By all means, including violence."

Sadat's desperation would be reaching a climax, Hirst observed, as it became clear that the Camp David strategy had failed, and he then asked, "Do you believe that a possible development of Sadat's policy would be a total alliance with Israel, which would be used as an

instrument to destroy his Arab adversaries?" To this incisive question Shazli responded in kind, declaring Sadat to be "either mad, ignorant, or a traitor."

It is startling to eavesdrop upon this pair discussing how murder will introduce democracy, quite as though this was a rational topic for a rational newspaper. (Temperament presumably explains why Hirst so badly wants Camp David to fail. His book, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, published in 1978, is perhaps the most malignantly anti-Israel book ever to be published in English by someone with claims to be a serious commentator.)

Blood-crazed fantasies have a way of coming true in the Middle East. Shazli did not have much longer to wait after this interview. Murderers once preferred covering up their crime to glorying in it, but by the evening of Sadat's assassination Shazli was claiming responsibility for it. In a statement issued in Libya he took credit for his National Front and congratulated "the courageous elements in the Egyptian army for their action against the man who betrayed Egypt and the Arab cause and acted on behalf of Zionism and Imperialism."

In the aftermath Shazli took steps to mystify and emend his actions and statements. Perhaps he perceived that a man who pretends to have committed a murder which benefits him cuts possibly an even more revolting figure than the actual murderer. The Egyptian authorities have rebutted him so far, or at least have not revealed any connection between his National Front and the small band of Moslem fundamentalists who did the shooting. Similarly, the films which purported to show crowds dancing in the streets of Tripoli and Beirut were probably faked for the consumption of those in the West who, like British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington, were seeking reasons to write off Camp David. Hard as their lot is, the Arabs, including Libyans and Palestinians, are easily moved, and by no means so brutalized that they would rejoice in any death quite so senseless, unless obliged to by someone with a gun at their backs. What Shazli could do, however, was threaten the incoming President, Hosni Mubarak. If Mubarak did not break with Sadat's policies, then his assassination "is not to be ruled out." What leaves its mark is the sterility of such pronouncements, as though rubbing out an individual rubs out a concept too. And yet this is the common currency of Arab public affairs. Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Hafez Assad in Syria, Qaddafi in Libya, the men who control the PLO factions, depend for their power upon determining carefully which opponents are to be murdered, and then having the means to do the deed expeditiously. In the emirates and sultanates of the Persian Gulf the same behavior prevails, but without the urgent need for public example.

With the exception of Lebanon, and that is now defunct, every Arab state remains essentially a medieval barony, in that it is arranged in every respect to

suit the baron who happens to have the strength to hold it. Foreign occupations have come and gone, wars of liberation have failed or succeeded, saints and Mahdis and reformers have passed upon the scene, and still there is no political evolution where it matters—in building institutions that would broaden or qualify or even legitimate the ruling despot's exclusive exercise of power. The reasons for this are passionately debated, needless to say, at every level of Arab society, and go to the roots of the present crisis of identity within the whole of Islam. The complex of religious, cultural, and historical factors which is perceived to be holding them in thrall to the past is also offering the only familiar or appreciated model for the future. In the contradiction grows craziness, extremism. Civic virtue and justice cannot be made accountable, and, worse, anyone idealistic enough to aim for them is likely to be destroyed.

THIS CONTEXT must be borne in mind if General Shazli's violences are to be understood. Now 60, Shazli belongs to that layer of the Egyptian peasantry which in the days of the British was just beginning to form what might be called a clerk class, that is, a class with some education but not enough to be at ease with Western notions. In 1939 he graduated from the Egyptian Military Academy. There was never occasion to wonder whether advancement of self and punishment of others might be less than an absolute imperative. He attended training courses in America and in the Soviet Union, and in the 1956 war was a corps commander. Two years later he was posted as military attaché to the embassy in London. He was a colonel, ready for politics as conceived in the traditional and nationalistic way. Jews were his enemies, and their enemies were Nazis, so inevitably Nazis must be his friends.

Nazis in this case meant two small-fry agitators called Colin Jordan and John Tyndall, who had originally been inspired by the prewar fascist and Hitlerite, Sir Oswald Mosley. Finding Mosley too old and tame, they had formed a National Socialist Movement of their own. Apparently it never had more than 187 paid-up members during its entire existence. What was missing in numbers was made up for by brawling, and the usual headline-catching mixture of outrage and clandestinity. In the summer of 1962 a Nazi camp was organized, to which the American George Lincoln Rockwell was invited, and a former SS colonel as well. A program was drafted, whose objectives involved the utter destruction of "the international Jew-Communist and Zionist apparatus of treason and subversion."

Jordan and Tyndall were thereupon arrested with two of their aides, Roland Kerr-Ritchie and Denis Pirie. In their Old Bailey trial, what principally attracted attention was Jordan's correspondence with Colonel Shazli at the Egyptian Embassy. Jordan had offered to cooperate with the Arab world in combating the "organized forces of Zionism and world Jewry." In order to do that, he asked £15,000 with which to set up

a printing press and a broadcasting station, and for a further £2,500 in expenses for each of the four men in the dock. Meetings between Shazli and some of these Nazis had occurred, and more were planned, and evidently Egyptian funds were available. The four Nazis were sent to prison, Pirie doing a Hitler salute as he was sentenced. Shazli was then declared *persona non grata* and obliged to leave England.

Nasser promoted him. He served in the Yemen war in 1965. By the time Anwar Sadat came to power, Shazli had become Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Army, and was therefore a likely contender for the presidency. The two men seem to have cooperated until the moment when the Yom Kippur War of 1973 turned sour on them. The Israeli counterattack was underway; troops were crossing the Suez canal, trapping the Egyptian Third Army in its rear. According to Sadat's version, he ordered Shazli to go into the field and hold Ismailia and Defresoir Lake. But following an anxious call from the Defense Minister, General Ahmed Ismail, Sadat went to command headquarters to find General Shazli collapsed. "He was saying the war was over, a disaster had struck, and that we had to withdraw entirely from the Sinai. I was afraid Shazli's despair might demoralize other commanders in the operations room." So Sadat sacked Shazli.

Shazli was appointed ambassador in London to get him out of the way. An outcry followed. The Foreign Office was reported by one newspaper to be "somewhat annoyed by the way the Egyptians have taken it for granted that the general would be accepted." That was the kind of tough talk that has made the Foreign Office as feared as it is the world over, and it even lasted for several weeks, whereupon this *persona non grata* was quietly accredited after all.

AS AMBASSADOR he was often in the news. He refused to talk on a television program to his Israeli colleague, Gidon Raphael; he addressed the General Union of Arab Students in London with criticism of Sadat; and finally, in 1975, he moved to Lisbon, where he released an embittered 8,000-word tirade accusing Sadat of being a dictator and a traitor. Since then he has enjoyed a false name and a Libyan passport.

No doubt personal humiliation plays the principal part in Shazli's recent action, and the memory of that day in command headquarters needs to be wiped out. But there is the wider political perspective: how else is a man like Shazli to proceed in the stratified autocracies of the Arab world? There is no outlet through which he can express his ambitions legitimately. Either he has to subordinate himself to the ruler in the long-term hope of the lucky break, Sadat-style and Mubarak-style, or he has to plot his coup, turn murderer, and step into the shoes of the dead. If Nazis prove helpful, as Shazli thought, then make them partners for as long as it is expedient. If Israelis prove helpful, as Sadat

thought, then they will have their day too.

Sadat certainly came up through this system, and for years was an eminent manipulator of it; it is instructive to compare how in his 1978 autobiography he toned down flattering remarks he had made about Hitler in the 1957 version. Sadat's greatness is that he was able to break out of the mold, and to learn from the sad example of Nasser what corruption lies in the enjoyment of power for its own sake. Sadat had a vision of what peace might bring Egypt. All that needs to be said to the Hirsts and Carringtons who wish Camp David to end in failure is that they will always be somewhere safe if the guns start firing again. If more war is wanted, then it can easily be engineered by any aspiring tyrant willing to ruin his country to advance himself, just like General Shazli.

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

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The private sector is under attack.

SANDINISTA SIEGE

Managua, Nicaragua

A few weeks ago, in a cell of a jail run by the Nicaraguan interior ministry, the biggest cotton grower in the country had a civilized, if curt, conversation with a man who spent two decades in the bush as a guerrilla. Enrique Bolaños, the cotton grower, says that the former guerrilla, Interior Minister Tomás Borge, asked him why he had signed a letter that says, among other things, that the Nicaraguan economy is in a state of collapse, that the country is on the verge of destruction, and that the ruling Sandinista Front may be contemplating genocide against those who dissent from its Marxist-Leninist ideas. "This time, *Comandante*," Bolaños replied, "I didn't have the honor." Soon after this exchange, Bolaños was ordered freed by a judge. Just as he had maintained, his signature had not appeared on the letter.

Three other leaders of Nicaragua's vociferous and highly organized private sector, however, were sentenced to seven months each for signing the letter, the contents of which the Sandinistas charged were a CIA-inspired violation of the laws of economic emergency and public security. Arrest orders are out for three others, two of them out of the country and one in hiding. Bolaños said he did not sign only because he is not one of the presidents of the six organizations that make up the Superior Council of Private Enter-

prise, which is known by its Spanish acronym, COSEP. He was arrested apparently because he appeared in the news photograph of the signing ceremony.

The arrests have touched off another of the many crises that have confronted Nicaragua in the 28 months since the Sandinistas took power, promising to maintain peaceful coexistence between Nicaraguans like Borge and Nicaraguans like Bolaños. This may be the worst crisis of all, because it comes at a time when the economy is in shambles, when there are regular armed clashes along the border with Honduras, and when Alexander Haig is threatening to overthrow or destabilize the regime. Some of the Sandinista leaders themselves have privately characterized the arrests as a ticking time bomb. They contributed to, or may have been the primary cause of, the resignation of Nicaragua's Ambassador to Washington, Arturo J. Cruz, a non-Marxist who is a lifelong friend of the most prominent of those jailed, COSEP president Enrique Dreyfus. Although his resignation had been expected soon for other reasons, Cruz made weekend trips home trying to arrange the releases of the prisoners before abruptly announcing he was quitting.

Confronted with these difficulties, the Sandinistas desperately want a display of national unity, which the political and economic opposition is willing to give only in exchange for some concessions by the Sandinistas. On the surface, each side would like nothing better than to rid itself of the other. But each side knows in its heart that it could not fill the vacuum caused by the sudden disappearance of the other—a political vacuum in the case of the Sandinistas, an economic one in the case of the private sector.

In contrast to Cuba 20 years ago, there is no sign that the Nicaraguan business class is ready to pack up and flee *en masse*, despite bullying from the Sandinistas. In September, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega accused the opposition leaders of supporting "imperialism" and threatened to hang them along the roads and highways in case of any foreign aggression. Although other Sandinista *comandantes* have taken pains to disavow this statement, it prompted the genocide remark in the COSEP letter. A common reaction among businessmen to the idea of leaving is the one that Enrique Bolaños had after his six days in jail. "This is my country," he told me. "Even while I was in jail I didn't think of leaving the country when I got out."

A TYPICAL case of Nicaraguan business resilience is that of the jailed Enrique Dreyfus. During the 1978-79 war to oust Anastasio Somoza, the Dreyfus family's 100-year-old department store was ransacked and destroyed. The family's cattle-raising operation was lost when all the cattle were slaughtered to pay guerrilla "war taxes." After the Sandinista triumph, when all mining was nationalized, not only were U.S.- and Canadian-owned gold mines taken, but so was a small Dreyfus-owned clay mine, which supplied raw

materials for a Dreyfus bath tile factory. In its enthusiasm, the government grabbed the tile factory as well. Dreyfus was appealing the confiscation when the letter landed him in jail.

This is not the first trying period for people like Dreyfus. Nicaraguan private enterprise—as an institution—grew strong during the Somoza years because it had to unify in order to survive. One of the great myths about Nicaragua is that the Somozas controlled the entire economy and ran it like a private estate. They did control a large chunk, but the rest—maybe two-thirds of the economy—was independently held.

That sector of the economy includes perhaps a half-dozen big industrialists and farmers, plus a large middle-sized sector and an even larger group of small businesses. These people have banded together in six organizations—chambers of industry, commerce and construction, a small-business cooperative, a national farmers' organization, and a professional people's group—united under the umbrella of COSEP. Recent figures compiled by COSEP claim that nearly one-third of the members of the Nicaraguan labor force consider themselves entrepreneurs, ranging from taxi drivers and tamale sellers to factory owners. Although the Somoza properties were confiscated, most of the rest of the economy was supposed to remain in private hands. Even today, after various spurts of new confiscations, more than half the economy is private, including 80 percent of agricultural production.

THE DISENCHANTMENT of Nicaraguan private enterprise with the Somozas is generally traced from the 1972 earthquake that destroyed downtown Managua. Great corruption was alleged in the distribution of international aid that poured into Nicaragua. This angered the businessmen, who felt that Somoza was pocketing money they could have used to rebuild. The issue simmered on the back burner during the mid-1970s while the Sandinistas, then a small guerrilla force that had been organized in 1961, carried out a few spectacular acts. The assassination in January 1978 of opposition newspaper publisher Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, allegedly by people connected to Somoza's eldest son, raised the flame under the private sector. Business leaders called a general strike of several weeks (it was actually a lockout with most employers paying their workers' salaries). By then, COSEP was beginning to evolve from a strictly business group into one dealing with general political questions and arguing that an ambience of political liberty was necessary for business growth. In the process, COSEP outdistanced the political parties. It remains a stronger force today.

Demands for Somoza's ouster grew throughout 1978, with more strikes, uprisings in the towns of Masaya and Matagalpa, and increasing guerrilla action. During this period, the private sector and the opposition parties thought they could get rid of Somoza

without bringing the Sandinistas to power. They pressured the United States to help. At the end of 1978, the U.S. proposed a plebiscite on whether Somoza should stay or go, but Somoza talked Washington out of the idea. Private enterprise leaders here are still bitter about the failure of the plebiscite proposal. They are convinced that the Sandinista Front would not be in power today if the United States had talked tough to Somoza then instead of waiting until the following July. It wasn't until the plebiscite proposal was on the point of failing that Fidel Castro called together representatives of the three Sandinista factions in Havana to forge a unity pact.

EVEN THOUGH the Sandinistas took power with a written commitment to political pluralism and a mixed economy, and set up a government junta that included two non-Marxists, relations between the Sandinista Front and the businessmen have been tense almost from the beginning. In the early months, while businessmen were campaigning in Washington to convince Congress to approve aid to Nicaragua, *comandantes* were much in evidence expounding before crowds of idle people on the difference between the good bourgeoisie and the bad bourgeoisie, good capitalists and bad ones. The tensions erupted in April 1980 with the resignation from the junta of Alfonso Robelo, one of the handful of big industrialists in Nicaragua and a former leader of COSEP. Overnight, Robelo ceased being a good bourgeois and became, in the rhetoric of the Sandinista chieftains, the same as Somoza. The situation worsened a year ago when state security forces killed Jorge Salazar, a popular business leader and coffee grower, claiming he was plotting to oust the Sandinistas. Salazar, who had built a strong grassroots following among thousands of small coffee-growers, has since become a sort of martyr of the private sector.

The COSEP leaders say their letter, dated October 19 and addressed to Daniel Ortega, a Sandinista *comandante* and coordinator of the junta, was not intended to violate the economic emergency law but was a serious contribution to the "national reflection" that the Sandinistas had been seeking on political and economic issues. The businessmen are now trying to deal themselves a strong hand by gathering what they claim are thousands of signatures on the three-page letter, with the implied threat to present the signatures in court in their campaign to win bail for Dreyfus and the others. They are, in effect, daring the authorities to arrest them all.

The Sandinistas got themselves into a bit of a bind because when they threw the businessmen in jail, they did the same to leaders of the small Communist Party and its trade union federation. The Communists were accused of violating the same law, by criticizing the ban on strikes and generally demanding a faster pace toward socialism. When the businessmen were sen-

tenced to seven months with bail possible, the Communists got three years with no bail allowed. The businessmen say the action against both groups was intended to make the Sandinistas look as if they are in the middle of Nicaraguan society. The Communists issued their document more than two weeks before the COSEP letter, but both sets of arrests came about 30 hours after Enrique Dreyfus read the COSEP letter on the radio, just the time needed for the nine *comandantes* on the Sandinista directorate to get together and decide what to do. Business leaders think the Sandinistas now regret the mess and would like to let everybody out of jail if they could do so without looking weak.

What appears to be in the making is a new pact between the Sandinistas and the non-Marxist opposition. Until that happens, say businessmen, their friends in jail will be more like hostages than prisoners. One side will again be arguing for elections, guarantees for private property and religion, and fewer restrictions on press freedom. The other will be demanding na-

tional unity in the face of fear of outside aggression. Among other things, the private enterprise leaders, many of whom were educated in the U.S. and have strong ties there, will be expected to carry the ball for the Sandinistas when Secretary of State Alexander Haig sounds off about Nicaraguan aid to Salvadoran guerrillas and related questions. Under the Carter Administration, the United States gave moral and financial support to the Nicaraguan private sector and tried to look the other way when the Sandinistas aided the Salvadorans. The Reagan Administration has set the private sector adrift by cutting off aid and has taken the offensive against the Sandinistas. This seems to leave both sides with no one to turn to except themselves—unless Libya comes up with new aid to the Sandinistas or the Soviets begin it on a large scale.

SHIRLEY CHRISTIAN

Shirley Christian is a Pulitzer Prize-winning Latin American correspondent for the *Miami Herald*.

The Soviets star in a Buster Keaton snuff film.

RUSSIA'S SWEDISH SUB SNAFU

BY THOMAS TEAL

Stockholm

THE CHANGE in mood was very, very sudden. One moment we had the Russians wiping custard from their faces in one of the best vaudeville turns ever to play the Baltic, and the next moment we had stunned silence. One mention of nuclear weapons and hilarity changed so quickly to shock that people didn't have time to close their mouths; their faces froze in mid-guffaw, and the blood drained out of them.

The first few days—the amusing part—were lovely. A Russian submarine sailed into a stringently restricted Swedish military zone, ran aground 50 feet from shore, raced its engines all night trying to pull free, and kept the neighbors awake for miles around. The formidable Swedish Navy took 15 hours to detect it. In fact the navy never detected it at all. The following morning, an irritated fisherman called the commander of the naval base and complained that there was a Russian sub in his herring nets.

Thomas Teal, who served on the White House staff in the Carter Administration, has translated a dozen books from the Swedish.

It took hours for word to reach Stockholm, and many Swedes didn't get the news until they read their papers on the second morning, 36 hours after the accident. The first reaction was mostly delight. The Swedes all know that *someone's* submarines have been violating Swedish territorial waters for years. Coastal mines have been snipped from their cables and spirited away, unarmed torpedoes have been stolen during test runs, and new Swedish submarines on shakedown cruises have come within inches of colliding with unknown underwater spectators. For two weeks last year, just off Stockholm, the Swedes hunted at least two foreign submarines of the Whiskey class—and dropped depth charges on them—without managing to force them either to surface or to leave. Ninety-three such incidents have been reported over the last 11 years—and it's hard to imagine how many have gone unreported when a sub on the surface inside a military area, making as much noise as a freight train at full throttle, can go unnoticed for 15 hours.

People have long speculated about the identity of all these subs. Many thought the Russians couldn't possi-

One of Stockholm's afternoon tabloids interviewed a Swedish submarine commander (the Swedes have a dozen submarines, including two or three of the most sophisticated non-nuclear submarines in the world), who said it was invariable practice in unknown coastal waters to run with your tanks partially filled. If you

Bild: ÅKE HÅKANSSON

... och på svenska

99 Det svenska folket reagerar återiskt mot Sovjets övergrepp. Den nyss utgående skolan blir till skada för de svenska-sovjetiska förbindelserna. U-båten var enligt svensk militär utrustad med stora sänkskärms utrustad med kärnvapen. Detta gör utrustningen ännu allvarigare. Den kommer i ett stopptrakt läge där svenska folket liksom folken i många andra länder kraftigt reagerar mot supermaktens kärnvapenupprustningar. Följden till de officiella sovjetiska förklaringarna om

respekt för Sveriges alliansfri utrikes och säkerhetspolitik har minskat. Detta gäller också den sovjetiska propagandan om Osterjön som ett ledens hav. I ett fredens hav ska inte finnas kärnvapenutrustade ubåtar. Och dessa ubåtar ska ännu mindre korsa Sveriges suveränitet. Men det beror nu framall på Sovjet om nya provokationer av det slag som inträffat ska kunna undvikas. Det är svenska folket hälsning till sovjetregimen och det sovjetiska folket. **99**

AFTER THE SOVIET U-BOAT WENT HOME

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Dramatik in i det sista när ubåten överlämnades

■ ■ Klockan 10.25 i dag lämnade ubåt 137 under stark eskort svenskt vatten och 20 minuter senare mottog den väntande sovjetiske amiralen Alexej Kalinin den med orden:

— Kommenderör, jag bekräftar att vi återfått vår ubåt.

■ ■ Bogseringen ut till den sovjetiska armaden blev inte den triumfart svenskarna planerat. Två meter höga vågor utanför skärgården tvingade bogsarna att låta den kärnvapenbestyckade ubåten gå för egen maskin.

■ ■ Det var amerikanska underrättelsetjänsten CIA som tipsade svenska regeringen om att ubåten var utrustad med kärnvapen. **Löbedramat: Ledare sidan 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13**

Bild: ÅKE HÅKANSSON

Extra sidor i dag:

10 dagar som skakade Sverige

En hel sektion mitt i tidningen

Aftonbladets kommentar på ryska

... och på svenska

11 Sovjetiska propagandisten Dmitri Gerasimov skriver i dagens Aftonbladet: Sovjeterna har fått tillbaka sin kärnvapenubåt. Detta är ett stort framgång för Sovjetunionen.

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11 Det svenska folket reagerar starkt mot Sovjets övergrepp. Den ryska ubåtens aktion blir till skada för de svenska-sovjetiska förbindelserna. Ubåten var enligt svensk militär experts med stor sannolikhet utrustad med kärnvapen. Detta gör kränkningen ännu allvarigare. Den kommer i ett stog till att säga att svenska folket i hela världen många andra länder kraftigt reagerar mot supermaktens kärnvapenupprustningar. Folklagen till de officiella sovjetiska fortfäringarna om respekt för Sveriges alliansfrihet och säkerhetspolitiska beslut. Detta gäller också den sovjetiska propagandan om Östersjön som ett fredens hav. I ett fredens hav ska inte finnas kärnvapenutrustade ubåtar. Och dessa ubåtar ska inte mindre skada Sverige än ubåtar. Men det tror nu främst på Sovjet om nya provokationer av det slag som inträffat ska kunna undvikas. Det är svenska folkets hälsning till sovjetregimen och det sovjetiska folket. 11

'GONE' SCREAMS A STOCKHOLM TABLOID AFTER THE SOVIET U-BOAT WENT HOME

There was in fact a legal question. It is international practice for warships to enjoy immunity from the laws of the countries they visit, even when such visits are uninvited. Territorial incursions almost never lead to legal action or to prison. The Swedish public prosecutor decided within 48 hours that there were no legal grounds for bringing an action against the officers or crew of the Russian sub. If Captain Gushin had shot the fisherman who found his boat, that would have been a different matter, but as it was, even obvious espionage was entitled to immunity from prose-

cution. Or at least so the public prosecutor seemed to think.

The Swedish political parties agreed with the government in this and in every other aspect of the crisis. Their solidarity was so unblemished that even the Communists supported the government's gravely worded protest to the Soviets. Swedish neutrality must be protected—everyone in the country agreed about that. There was some difference of opinion on how best to accomplish this, but the general goal was not in dispute. The Swede in the street, expressing himself in the letters-to-the-editor columns of the daily papers, favored somewhat drastic measures—incarceration of the crew, criminal charges against the officers, confiscation of the submarine, exchange of prisoners for Raoul Wallenberg. Many of these letters made a point of the way Swedes would have been treated if a Swedish sub had run aground off Riga, say. The government, however, ignored the man on the street and took a moderate stand—tough but dispassionate.

THE WALLENBERG scheme was toyed with and rejected. To begin with, the Russians do not admit to holding Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who saved the lives of thousands of Hungarian Jews during World War II by issuing them Swedish identity papers, and who has been intermittently reported to be alive in various Soviet prisons. If the submarine had been captured secretly, there might have been some basis for a trade. "Submarine? What submarine?" the Swedes might have said, and by and by perhaps Wallenberg would have turned up. Lacking both the opportunity and the stomach for that kind of horse trading, the only thing the Swedes could have done would have been openly to hold the crew hostage, and that would have been a clear violation of international law. The Soviets would have protested—quite justifiably—and they would certainly have held the grudge. In addition, they could always have turned the thing into a shoving match by seizing the crew of some inoffensive Swedish freighter in Sevastopol, and that is not the sort of shoving match the Swedes can win. As one Swedish diplomat put it privately, "When it comes to violating international law, Sweden cannot compete with the Soviet Union."

Trading for Wallenberg was out of the question. Seizing the ship and bringing charges against its officers was probably illegal and certainly imprudent. Yet Sweden had to assert its neutrality and hold the Soviet Union to account, which was not an easy assignment.

The Russians were already furious with the Swedes for not letting them steam straight in with tugs and destroyers and tow their submarine to safety. According to one Swedish diplomatic source, the Russian ambassador in Stockholm was nearly apoplectic with rage. When dealing with a next-door neighbor 50 times your size who is vain, humorless, and armed to

the teeth with superior weapons, caution and moderation are more or less the *sine qua non* of any negotiating stance, even when you hold every trump, as the Swedes did. Once aroused, a Russian desire for revenge could express itself at its leisure and in unpredictable forms.

At the same time, the Swedes had to be firm toward the Russians, and perhaps slightly belligerent—because in a curious way belligerence is the key to Swedish neutrality, which is purely a military policy.

Sweden is not impartial or nonpartisan in ideological or economic matters. Swedish neutrality is not an effort to deal symmetrically with the great powers or to occupy some detached middle ground between capitalism and communism or between freedom and repression. Sweden is an open, capitalistic, libertarian society, and in matters of trade, ideology, culture, etc., it pursues whatever policies it finds appropriate, however lopsided those policies may be. Only with respect to war is Sweden bound in advance to a specific course.

In its most basic terms, Swedish neutrality is a military commitment—a commitment not to permit the use of its territory for any military purpose by any foreign power and to resist any such effort to the full extent of its own military capacity. If the Red Army tries to cross northern Sweden to get at Norway, or if the U.S. Navy tries to use western Sweden to control access from the Baltic to the North Atlantic, the Swedes promise to shoot at both of them equally. In Sweden, this promise is solemn, and popular.

The Swedes' own picture of this doctrine is a hedgehog with spines pointing in every direction. It is not, as Americans have called it, a "neutrality with teeth," as if the teeth were incidental. It is a neutrality by means of teeth, a pugnacious neutrality. Don't tread on me. Don't even tiptoe on me to get at someone else.

SO THE Swedes had to show their spines. They put on a military display outside Karlskrona to prove that they were prepared to resist with violence any Soviet attempt to rescue the submarine. At the same time, they made four demands on the Soviet government: 1) the submarine would be towed free and escorted out of Swedish waters by the Swedish Navy alone; 2) the Soviet Union would pay all the expenses of such an operation; 3) the Soviet Union would cooperate in an investigation of the incident that would include; 4) Swedish questioning of the Russian captain. Galling as it must have been, the Russians agreed to all four demands, and delivered an unexpected apology.

In the meantime, while serious negotiation was going on at high levels, a rich flora of rumors and reports was blooming in the papers and by word of mouth. The Russians were going to attempt an airborne landing. (False.) The Russians were sending a fleet. (True—well, a squadron.) The submarine had run aground on a mine, unknown to the officers and crew. (False, apparently.) The captain had been ar-

rested on board by his political officer and locked in his cabin. The captain had *not* been arrested by his political officer and locked in his cabin. (False and true, respectively—and the papers blandly explained, on successive days, that arresting the captain, or not arresting him, was normal procedure.) The Soviet government was engaged in a power struggle with the Soviet military, which explained the delay in conveying instructions to the submarine command. (No one knows.) The Swedes had mobilized their Coastal Artillery and were preparing to shell the Russian fleet. (Perhaps so, if the Russians had tried to land.) There was a mysterious unidentified superior officer on board the sub. (True; it was the submarine flotilla commander from Kaliningrad.) The mission of the Russian sub had been to place atomic mines in the coastal waters or to set out signal buoys to guide atomic torpedoes to Karlskrona. (Only the Russians know the answer to that one.) The crew was composed entirely of Estonians and Latvians, but the officers were all Russian, and mutiny was imminent.

THIS LAST rumor originated in part with a Swedish seaman who had been out to the sub on a garbage detail. He reported that one of the Soviet crew had dropped a milk carton overboard while transferring slops, and that the officer in charge had dressed him down sharply and made threatening gestures. This led to a headline about the Russian officers treating their crew like “swine,” although it could just as well have led to a headline about Russian concern for the anti-littering laws. Or maybe not. Why draw the line at a milk carton when you have littered the coastline with 1,000 tons of surplus military equipment?

It certainly looked surplus, sitting there on the rocks. About 200 of the 240 Whiskey-class submarines the Soviets built in the mid-1950s have already been scrapped or put into mothballs. They are diesel-driven, crowded, miserable boats, with a crew of 60, only half of whom can sleep at any one time, and with primitive hygienic standards and toilets so small you have to back into them. Descriptions of the damp and the stench on board made it sound like a medieval dungeon. On top of all that, of course, and much more important, was the grounded submarine’s extreme superfluosness for the Russian image. In one of their cornier propaganda initiatives, the Russians had recently taken to calling the Baltic the “Sea of Peace.” U-137 made it look like a shallow sea indeed.

On the sixth day, a storm came up and the submarine developed a decided list and began banging on the rocks. Moments after Captain Gushin left his boat for questioning aboard a Swedish cutter, the crew—sick and tired of the deafening noise and the lack of warm food (the boat was listing too heavily for the stove to function)—sent up a distress flare. Waiting Swedish tugs quickly towed the sub to deeper water. It was first-rate slapstick, with the Russians looking like fools

and behaving like adolescents, telling preposterous lies and brandishing machine guns at reporters. The Swedes glued themselves to newscasts, devoured the newspapers, and chuckled at the Russians’ mortification. And then the vaudeville turned to horror.

“Probability verging on certainty” of nuclear weapons in the forward torpedo room, said Prime Minister Thorbjörn Fälldin. The comedy ended so abruptly it might have been a Buster Keaton snuff film. The government had known for nearly a week. The night after the submarine ran aground, three men from the Swedish Defense Department’s Research Laboratory went out in a rowboat with an outboard motor and made some rough measurements in the rain with a handheld Geiger counter before the Russian night watch chased them away with submachine guns. What they discovered brought them back a day and a half later with some very sophisticated instruments hidden below deck in a small patrol boat. Their findings were scientifically if not politically unequivocal: there were ten kilograms of uranium-238 in the forward torpedo room, and the only likely use for U-238 in such quantities is as a shield or shell around fissionable U-235 or plutonium-239. Suddenly everything made sense—the Russian consternation, the unexpected apology, Captain Gushin’s odd behavior, the sending of a Russian fleet—and suddenly the Swedes were scared.

Almost as frightening as the Russians’ military carelessness was their political recklessness. Just when the Swedes were upset with U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger for casting doubt on Sweden’s commitment to neutrality during his recent visit here, just when the largest peace movement in memory was turning a fairly friendly face toward the USSR, just when the Russian-backed “Scandinavian nuclear-free zone” was catching on in a big way, just when Brezhnev was about to leave for Bonn to talk peace, just when Reagan had scared the bejesus out of every European with his talk of limited nuclear war—the Soviets found it expedient to arm this junkyard submarine with nuclear weapons and then acciden-



BY FOLKE NORDLINDER FOR "SVENSKA DAGBLADET"

tally run it aground inside a heavily mined neutral military base in the Sea of Peace.

What were they thinking of? The Swedes lodged an anguished protest, and the Russians replied that their submarines were "equipped with the necessary armaments and ammunition." As Sven Britton, a prominent Swedish commentator, said in an open letter to the Soviets a couple of days later, "You thereby declare nuclear weapons to be necessary equipment on your naval vessels, whereas navigational instruments seem to be of secondary importance."

Olof Palme, the former Social Democratic Prime Minister who once took part in a demonstration against U.S. involvement in Vietnam, led a demonstration against the Soviet Union. A Russian citizen temporarily in Sweden wrote to a Swedish newspaper to express his shame. The peace movement caught its breath and then surged ahead on a somewhat altered course, one that would presumably address its appeals as much to Moscow as to Washington. The Conservative and Social Democratic parties, once the need for unity was past, staked out areas for nit-picking (the Conservatives criticized the public prosecutor's "premature" decision not to bring charges, the Social

Democrats quibbled with the deployment of the crack Red Berets along the shoreline facing the submarine). The Swedish Communist Party went ahead with plans for the first congress in its history without a Russian delegation. The Danish and Norwegian governments expressed their amazement and dismay. The Finns had no comment. The sub sailed home to Kaliningrad.

As for the Russians, they seemed hardly fazed. In Oslo, a Russian scientist declared that the detected radiation must have come from luminous wrist-watches, while Tass heaped ridicule on the very idea that any country would equip such submarines with atomic weaponry. The Soviet government, once it had recovered its ordnance, ignored the subject of nuclear weapons entirely in its formal reply to the Swedish protest and stuck steadfastly to its original lie.

The Swedish note concluded with a demand that the Soviet Union prevent a repetition of their flagrant violation of Swedish territory. The Russians were archly uncomprehending. The gyrocompass was out of order, they said. Accidents will happen, and accidents, by definition, cannot be guaranteed against. Your demand runs counter to the dictates of common sense.

The really important cases never make the front page.

THE ETHICS OF HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

WHEN WE THINK of the ethics of medical experimentation on human beings, the images that come to mind are those of uncommon heroism or barbarism. There are the legends: Werner Forssman, the first to run a catheter through an arm vein into the heart—his own; Jonas Salk, who gave his polio vaccine first to his own children; or the kindly Louis Pasteur, who, with sleeves rolled up, risked his reputation to save a child from rabies. And there are the infamous cases: the Brooklyn study, where live cancer cells were injected into unknowing elderly patients; the Willowbrook experiment, where retarded children were injected with hepatitis virus; and the Tuskegee experiment, where a group of black men with syphilis were denied treatment for 40 years. And there is the ultimate horror—the hundreds of brutal and capricious experiments by which the Nazis maimed and murdered thousands of concentration camp inmates.

The infamous cases, paradoxically, have turned out

to be ethically instructive. They forced us to confront the outer limits of permissible research and to establish rules. The Nazi experience led directly to the promulgation of the Nuremberg Code, which, for the first time, set down an explicit set of rules for the conduct of research on human beings. It established certain absolute claims on all research: that it minimize risk to the subject, that the risk be commensurate with the medical benefits, and, most important, that the subject give uncoerced consent to participate. In the past 30 years, these rules have been elaborated and refined. The United States, for example, has evolved a decentralized system of peer review of research ethics. It has also developed a detailed set of regulations governing all federally funded research. The regulations embody the Nuremberg principles and give special protection to certain vulnerable classes of subjects like prisoners, children, and the mentally ill. Concern about research ethics has been heightened by the growing technological sophistication of medicine, the increasing alienation

of patient from researcher, and a general distrust of experts—all reinforcing calls for third-party (usually government) protection of the patient. But the demand for higher ethical standards in research has also come as a direct reaction to scandals like Tuskegee. And last month the *Washington Post* thought it had uncovered another.

For four consecutive days the *Post* ran a sensational series of front-page articles entitled "The War On

Cancer: First Do No Harm." The subtitle, taken from the Hippocratic oath, was meant as an ironic comment on the ethics of experimental cancer chemotherapy. The articles told a harrowing series of anecdotes about terminally ill patients subjected to the sometimes agonizing, occasionally fatal, side effects of experimental drugs. The series caused an uproar: floods of letters to the editor, congressional hearings, and reports of anxiety, even panic, among some cancer patients. (The *Boston Globe* reported on a patient with curable Hodgkin's disease who withdrew from proven—nonexperimental—cancer chemotherapy.) The extent of the reaction to the articles was somewhat puzzling. Scientifically, they were of no interest whatsoever. As the deputy editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine* dryly said, we really didn't need a year-long investigation to tell us that anti-cancer drugs kill normal cells and therefore can cause debilitating side effects. The ethics of the case were equally unremarkable. There was the usual handful of venal doctors who misled their patients by overstating possible benefits or concealing risks. And there was the usual bureaucratic delay and governmental laxness in tracking these people down. But the series implied some-

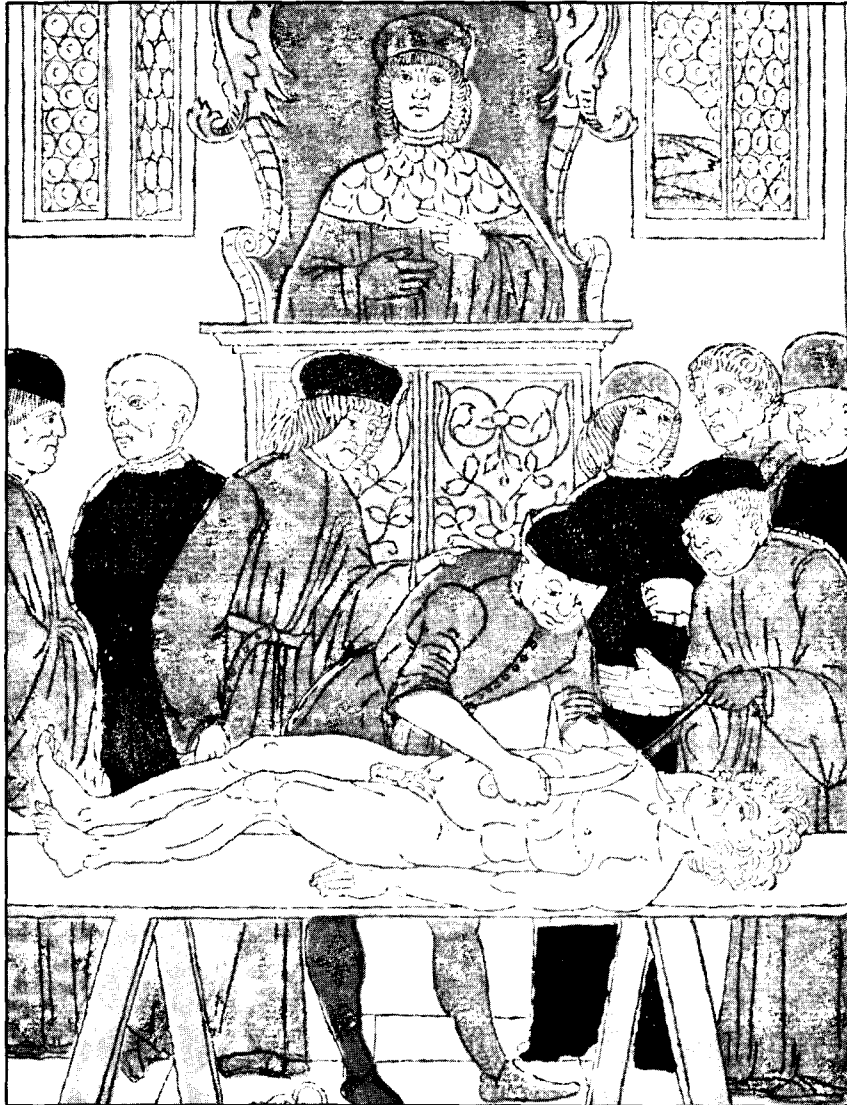
thing more: that there is something morally suspect about the entire enterprise of experimental chemotherapy. And that is where the *Post* went wrong.

The story of experimental chemotherapy is one of unremitting suffering and sorrow, but only because that is cancer's story, too. Whatever else it may be, experimental chemotherapy is not an ethical conundrum. It is not a Nuremberg, or even a Tuskegee. First, the patients consent to, and sometimes even demand,

the new treatment. Second, the experimental therapy is not being studied purely for possible benefits to others; however long the odds, it may be therapeutic for the patient. In fact, some patients, like those with Hodgkin's disease or testicular tumors, have been cured with experimental drug treatments. And, finally, the patients are terminally ill. They know that the cost of inaction is death. Given these conditions, if a patient chooses to risk pain and possible disability for a chance at life, it is unethical to refuse. Hans Jonas, a philosopher and a strict constructionist when it comes to defining the rights of research patients, goes so far as to say the intro-

duction of untried therapy into treatment where the tried ones have failed cannot even properly be considered experimentation on the patient.

Imagine a harder case. The patient consents. The treatment, though unproven and possibly dangerous, is potentially therapeutic. But the chances of the patient dying without treatment are not 100 percent but, say, 16 percent. To treat or not to treat? This was precisely the situation Louis Pasteur faced in December 1884 while conducting a series of experiments on rabid dogs. He was beseeched by letter to treat a young child who had been bitten. Pasteur refused, saying that his



'A LESSON IN DISSECTION' ATTRIBUTED TO GENTILE BELLINI (1493). THE GRANGER COLLECTION

hand would “tremble” before applying the treatment to humans. Eight months later, another child, Joseph Meister, was brought to him with 14 bites from a rabid dog. Pasteur made the opposite decision, but “not without vivid and profound anxiety.” He decided to treat Joseph Meister despite the fact that, as Princeton historian Gerald Geison has shown, Pasteur by his own (later) admission had not yet established the efficacy of his new treatment in animals. “My first experiments on this point,” wrote Pasteur, “date from the month of August 1885”—a month *after* he had begun to treat Meister—and even then “success had been but partial.” So problematical was Pasteur’s decision that Emile Roux, one of Pasteur’s most gifted collaborators, reportedly refused to sign the first report of treatment. As it turned out, Meister was saved. But whether this was because, or in spite, of Pasteur’s treatment, we will never know.

MY POINT is not to try Pasteur in the retrospective court of 20th-century ethics. It is to point out that in therapeutic research, ethical quandaries arise when the patient’s prognosis (without treatment) is unknown—not when it is hopeless. But one doesn’t have to go back to Pasteur to illustrate the real ethical dilemmas of experimental therapy. A uniquely modern version is posed by the relatively new research technique of the controlled clinical trial, which has provided an extraordinarily powerful way of finding out what therapies work. In its simplest version it randomly assigns patients and gives the new therapy to one group and a placebo to the other. The patients, and in some designs the doctors, don’t know who belongs to which group. (They are “blind.”) The ethical problems of blind placebo controls are complex. But they don’t make good copy. Consider another medical story that appeared on the front page just as the brouhaha over the *Post*’s cancer series was reaching a crescendo. It was the report of an unequivocal medical triumph: a three-year study proving that the drug propranolol prevents death in heart-attack victims. How was this proved? By randomly dividing the patients into two groups, giving one propranolol and the other placebo (in identical capsules, so no one knew who was getting what), and then observing the rate at which patients died in each group. In this particular study it appeared from the start that more people were

dying on placebo, but it was not until October 1981, the third year of the study, that the number of excess deaths in the placebo group (48) reached mathematical significance and thus proved propranolol’s superiority to placebo. The researchers then stopped the study and declared propranolol the winner, because to continue beyond that point merely to achieve more scientific precision would have been unethical.

BUT WHEN is it ethical to proceed to that point? If one knows a new therapy to be better, to deny it to half of one’s patients is unethical. It is because one isn’t sure that one undertakes the trial in the first place. But how unsure must one be? And how important is it to know? Some doctors believe it immoral to subject sick and, perhaps, dying patients to the additional anxiety of the flip of a coin. But even they would probably concede that when the new treatment is suspected of being more toxic than existing treatments, a controlled study is justified. True, the harm caused by an untested bad treatment will probably be picked up in time anyway, but often not soon enough: bleeding and purging went on for decades; thalidomide, in the short time it was used, destroyed many lives. But what if the drug is not toxic and is known to be relatively safe? Why risk denying potentially life-saving treatment to some patients merely to prove not safety but efficacy? Why not simply let the therapy out of the bag and let it test itself in the marketplace? The answer is that useless therapies, even if not immediately harmful, divert important resources and can complicate patients’ other medical treatments. (They may also have unsuspected toxic effects: anticoagulant drugs were given to stroke patients until a controlled study demonstrated that they caused cerebral hemorrhages.) And once the cat is out of the bag, it may be impossible to get it back in. The more widespread and accepted a procedure, the more difficult it becomes to justify a controlled trial which would deny it to a number of patients. That is why the Food and Drug Administration exercises such a strict therapeutic quarantine on new drugs: not only to prevent more thalidomides, but also to prevent a plague of useless drugs. It is also why in surgery, which has no FDA to regulate it, useless procedures can linger on for years. Thousands of tonsillectomies and adenoidectomies are still done on children every year, despite the absence of evidence that they do anything except in a few uncommon conditions. The cost is enormous: about \$500 million and the loss of scores of lives each year. “Why?” asks Dr. Leon Eisenberg of the Harvard Medical School. “It is done because doctors and parents believe in it; having become usual and customary, it is not subject to the systematic scrutiny of an experimental design.”

The case for controlled clinical trials is very powerful. But how does one balance the gain in scientific knowledge and social utility against the cost to the individual patient? Consider the anxiety produced



COMING

Stanley Kauffmann on
Warren Beatty’s *Reds*.

when the patient doesn't know if he is getting sugar pills or "the real thing." One respected researcher told me of his method for studying a new drug in patients suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease, a universally fatal muscle-wasting illness. Since the disease is too rare to stock control and noncontrol groups, he uses each patient as his own control. He tells the patient: "I am going to give you a pill. It will either be a placebo or the new drug. If you feel better on it, stay with it. As soon as you feel it is not doing you any good and you want to switch, you may do so. But only once. Once you have given up a drug, you cannot go back to it." A clever design to neutralize the placebo effect that occurs when testing any potential cure, but will the knowledge gained be worth the cost to the patient?

How far may one go to prove efficacy? When should one settle for less than perfect knowledge? This question arose when an experimental drug (ara-A) was given to patients with herpes encephalitis, a disease with a 70 percent death rate; another group randomly selected was given placebo. Their death rates were compared. Predictably, about 70 percent of those on placebo died. Most of those on the new drug survived. Could not all the patients have been given the new drug, using what are called historical controls—comparing the outcome of those on the new drug to the usual, already known, course of the illness? Admittedly, placebo controls yield more reliable results than historical controls, but again—at what cost?

ONE FINAL example. Twenty years ago some patients with heart disease were treated by opening the chest and implanting an internal mammary artery into the wall of the heart. (It was a precursor of today's coronary bypass operation.) Some doctors suspected the procedure to be useless. One eminent researcher and noted anesthesiologist, Dr. Henry Beecher, recommended a controlled study using sham operations. A group in Seattle did just that. They took half the patients to the operating room, made an incision of the skin of the chest, and then sewed it up without doing anything else. These patients fared no better or worse than those who had the complete operation. Internal mammary implantation died a quiet death after that and many lives were undoubtedly saved. But was it ethical to submit half the patients to fake operations simply to make them think they had had one, and thus eliminate the placebo effect? True, these patients underwent much less risk than those who had the complete operation and did just as well. And giving the control group no treatment at all rather than sham treatment would have yielded slightly less reliable results. But how do we weigh the requirements of scientific precision against the welfare of the patient?

My point is not to indict controlled trials. It is, first, to distinguish the easy from the hard ethical questions. Willowbrook and Tuskegee on the one hand, and cancer chemotherapy on the other, seem to me to be

simple cases. The ethics of using placebo controls in therapeutic trials seems more difficult. The answers here are not to be found in the Hippocratic oath, the Nuremberg Code, or the Federal Register, but in delicately choosing between mutually incompatible values. Second, the hard ethical cases are almost always undramatic, even mundane. That is because they tend to occur at the margin and in a rather narrow focus: balancing a little scientific precision versus a little patient safety, a dose of knowledge versus a dose of patient anxiety. And yet, the narrowness of the focus does not make the choice any less agonizing or the principles at stake any less lofty.

PRINCETON theologian Paul Ramsey carried on a long-running debate with Georgetown philosopher Richard McCormick over whether it is ethical to conduct experiments on children, since children are incapable of giving informed consent. Ramsey described the stakes as a battle between the "Judeo-Christian tradition with its whole-hearted concern for the individual" on the one hand and the "futuristic ethics" of social utility on the other. It turned out, however, that in practice Ramsey and McCormick agreed on almost all cases: research that may directly benefit the child is permissible; research that cannot benefit the child (though it may benefit others) and that places him at risk is impermissible. The sole area of disagreement was over the remaining category: research that holds out no direct benefit to the child, but involves little or no risk to him. Is it permitted? McCormick says yes—if there is little or no risk we may infer the child's consent to be used to help others. Ramsey says no—we are forbidden by God and Kant and Nuremberg to use anyone as a means to another's ends without his express consent. In other words, the epic struggle between the "Judeo-Christian tradition" and "futuristic ethics" in practice is over whether one may conduct an experiment which requires taking a single drop of blood from a child's finger! That is not the stuff from which scripts are made or headlines written. But it is at the heart of medical ethics.

In contrast, cancer chemotherapy, like other sensational stories of human pathos, poses *existential*, not ethical, dilemmas: whether intolerable life is preferable to peaceful death, whether hope—and pain—with treatment is preferable to resigned acceptance without. It forces the unwilling patient (and that is the source of the pathos) to confront what Camus called the one truly serious philosophical question—the question of suicide. In medical ethics the one truly serious question is quite different. It is how much we may use one person for the benefit of others. At the top of that slippery slope we must ask ourselves when, for the sake of humanity in general, we may add the confusions of randomness to the existing suffering of a patient or when we may disturb a single hair on the head of a healthy child.

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

From Three Countries

Does the CIA watch Soviet films? I don't mean military or political stuff but theatrical films. If our intelligence people do keep an eye on those films, they must be worried. Most of the Soviet

The Shooting Party
(Corinth)

Body Heat
(Warner Brothers)

The Devil's Playground
(IFEX/EMC)

pictures that I've seen since *The Lady With The Dog* (TNR, December 1, 1962) have been so technically poor that one inference emerges: the best of technological skill and inventiveness has been channeled out of film—as well as out of other fields, of course—into military work. Otherwise how could a country with such awesome space and submarine technology make a film as technically clumsy as *The Shooting Party*?

Clearly the Soviets haven't been spending much time on matters like film stock and color photography. The color in this film, made in 1977, is not markedly advanced past that of the first American Technicolor feature, *Becky Sharp*, made in 1935. The very tracks on which the Soviets move their cameras seem to have been cobbled by amateurs.

Also, Soviet priorities in art, as well as science, have been revised to downgrade film. Lenin's familiar remark, that film is the most important art, apparently no longer applies. We know something about the quality of Soviet theater performance (the actors in this film are generally good) and we know a good deal about Soviet dance which—in performance, not choreography—is excellent. But filmmaking as such, insofar as we see Soviet films here, seems to have lost the interest of Soviet power centers.

The Shooting Party was adapted, from Chekhov, and was directed by Emil Lotyanu (born 1936) who is said to be

one of the best of his generation. Some generation. The qualities that Lotyanu shows here—in narrative fluency, pictorial composition, zooming and dolly-ing—combine the worst elements of American quickies and of East European artiness. Some of the editing, both picture and sound, is dime-store stuff; and the symbols! I make it a rule to leave any film in which, near the beginning, riderless horses run through, particularly a white horse. I broke my own rule here, and suffered for it.

Depending on which critic you read, *The Shooting Party* is either the second or the only novel that Chekhov wrote—in 1884, when he was 24. (The other contender is *Useless Victory*, written two years earlier.) I haven't read it, but two critics tell us that Agatha Christie later used the plot though they don't tell us in which novel. However, it was made as an American film called *Summer Storm*, with George Sanders and Linda Darnell, in 1944, which I saw but forget.

A year before his death from consumption, a fortyish magistrate, played well by Oleg Yankovsky (who looks like a fair-haired John Osborne), gives an editor the manuscript of an autobiographical novel and is told that he must wait three months for a decision. While he is waiting, the film flashes back to tell us the story of the novel. The magistrate was once a guest at a count's country estate; met the raven-haired young daughter of a forester who fell in love with him; was attracted to her yet allowed her to marry another man; and was involved in the tragic results. As has been noted, the piece has harbingers of *The Seagull*, which was to come along 12 years later. The girl has a suggestion of Nina, a lovestruck innocent sacrificed to the passing interest of a sophisticate; and the magistrate has a touch of that solipsist, Trigorin.

The girl, Galya Belyayeva, is fresh, piquant, vital; yet Lotyanu manages to turn her into a series of filmic clichés. The first time we see her, in flashback,

she is wearing a supposedly classy outfit, standing in the magistrate's garden, holding out her arms to him; the outfit is a hideous blue, no garden ever looked more like a studio backlot, and the camera closing in on her moves bumpily. Then, in the "present" of the story, we see her racing through the woods. She carries a twittering little bird of course, she wears a clinging scarlet dress of course, her long hair is wind-tossed of course. (She is always wind-tossed, even when reverse shots of people in the same scene show them with not a hair ruffled.) And the overload of pseudo-classic nude statuary, the peeling grandeur of the count's mansion, the band of gypsy musicians on call—with emotions at the ready—24 hours a day, all these mix crude art with cruder satire of the Russian past. My favorite "meaningful" shot was of all the dozen or so gypsy musicians crowded on a tiny island in the middle of a small pond while the drunken count has himself rowed around them in the mist, tearfully toasting them in wine. (He's supposed to be dying of drink, but he lives long enough to lose his estate and become the magistrate's coachman.)

Brains, discretion, sheer energy seem to have been withdrawn from what was once a strong national effort, the Soviet film industry. Where has all that force gone? CIA, on guard!

FILMS WORTH SEEING

... *All the Marbles*. This comedy about two women wrestlers and their manager is undeniably violent but also undeniably good-hearted and funny.

Chariots of Fire. The basically true story of two British runners in the 1924 Olympics, elaborated into a moving social drama.

My Dinner with André. André Gregory, a well-known avant-garde theater director, and Wallace Shawn, a lesser-known playwright, have dinner and talk. No, I didn't believe it would be interesting, either; but it is.

Time Bandits. An English boy and six dwarfs explore holes in time and space. Written and directed by two of the Monty Python gang. A child's delight, a parent's fun.

SK

Two films are making the rounds these days that are at polar extremes on the subject of sex. In the American film *Body Heat*, virtually everything possible between a man and a woman is suggested, if not done. In the Australian film *The Devil's Playground*, even sexual thoughts are proscribed.

Body Heat, written and directed by Lawrence Kasdan, has been hailed as a triumph of style. When that is said about a director without a trace of originality or *self*, what it means is that he has a good memory. Kasdan has seen, among others, a lot of Sternberg and Welles, I'd guess, so there's much low-key lighting, summer-night gauziness, coursing over bodies, mixed with close-ups of ugliness. I haven't seen so much close-up sweat since Welles's *Lady from Shanghai*. Everyone talks about the weather in Florida, where *Body Heat* is set, but nobody does anything about it. Is there really no air conditioning in police stations and wealthy homes?

William Hurt, who's beginning to pall, is a shoddy lawyer in a small Florida coastal town who gets involved with a sultry young wife. Her nasty rich husband is away a lot. The plot sickens. Kasdan's script has been compared with *Double Indemnity*. But the scene in which the lovers first raise the possibility of doing away with the husband seemed to me to derive from Zola's *Thérèse*

Raquin. (But maybe *Double Indemnity* did, too.) The plot has been hailed as clever and neat, but you could wear out that proverbial truck driving it through the holes in the script wide enough to accommodate it.

The Devil's Playground is an earlier film by Fred Schepisi, who made the impressive *Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, and, in fact, *Playground* is well-enough written and directed and acted. The trouble is, once you know the subject, you know the picture. It's about adolescent boys in an Australian boarding school run by Roman Catholic Brothers who are educating the boys to join their order. Every blatantly foreseeable strophe of frustration and remorse follows.

I was repelled by the antihumanism of *Playground*, but I was equally repelled by the quite different antihumanism of *Body Heat*. The former denies the fullness of earthly life to those not yet and perhaps not ever prepared to live sheerly spiritually; the latter degrades life by taking sexuality as the totality of value. I wished for a "bridge" sequence between the two films—say, the clerical headmaster of the Australian school somehow stumbled into the busy Florida boudoir, was shocked by the abandon of the lovers, and shocked them by the fierceness of his anger. It might have been healthy for everyone concerned.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

The Naked and The Dressed

Ronald Harwood, who once looked after Donald Wolfit's doublet and hose, has fashioned a theatrical patchwork about this legendary British actor-manager and his times. It is called *The Dresser*

The Dresser
by Ronald Harwood

Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You
by Christopher Durang

(Brooks Atkinson Theater), and, as a work of drama, it is agreeable, contrived, predictable, and sentimental, which is to say, much like those rickety vehicles (*The Bells*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*) such vagrant actors used to chauffeur when they didn't have Shakespeare

sitting in the garage. The most amiable thing about *The Dresser* is its affection for the seedy backstage mores of circuiting rep companies, expressed in an alternately fustian and bitchy style. I can see the play being performed annually at the Garrick Club in London or the Player's in New York, for it is soaked in the same kind of boozy anecdotes that retired actors like to pour out while waving shotglasses of Old Grand Dad over their soiled cravats and egg-spattered velvet smoking jackets.

Set in 1942 during the Blitz, *The Dresser* is nostalgic for a period when the show went on despite the fatal illness of the principal performer, the loss to National Service of the younger male



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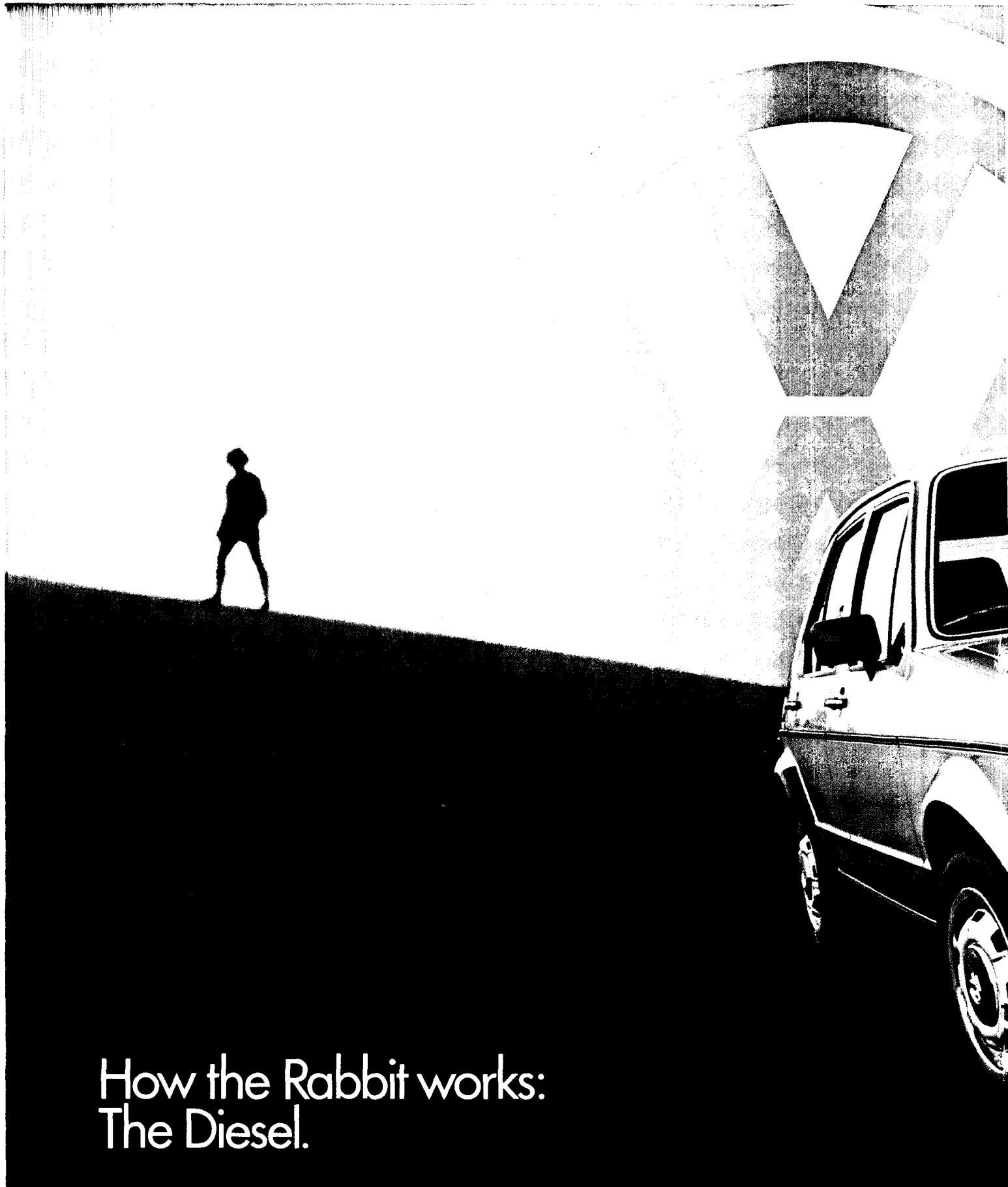
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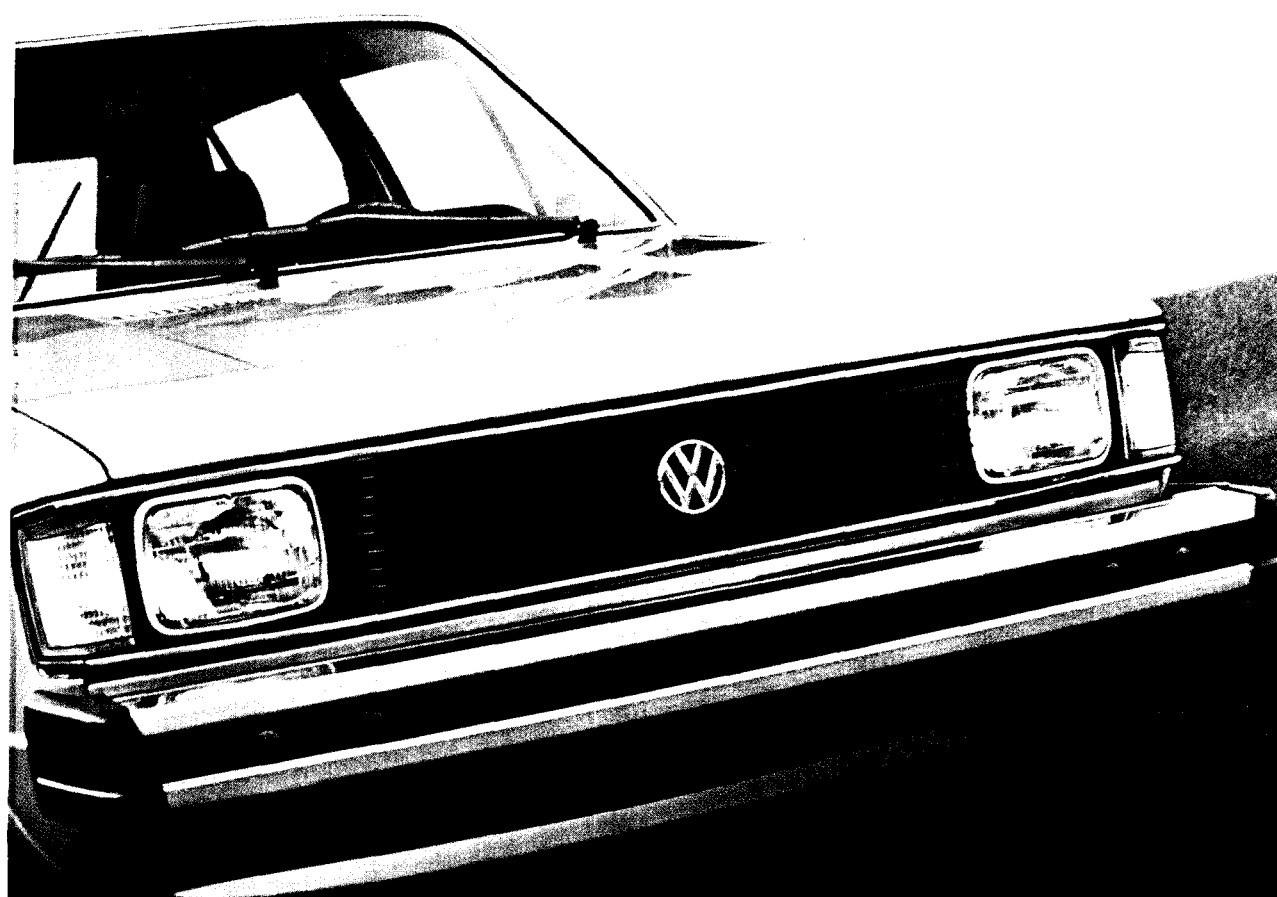


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company members, or the bombs being dropped on stage by what the Wolfit figure irately calls "squadrons of Fascist Bolsheviks." As in most nostalgia trips, however, the landscape seems vague, if not somewhat fuzzy—particularly in its image of human relationships. *The Dresser* works best as an isolated character sketch; it needs more tailoring as a play. The exposition is lumpy, the plot stitching is visible, the supporting characters are threadbare. The most potentially interesting dramatic issue—the resentment felt by a self-sacrificing underling toward his self-regarding employer—is raised without being resolved, because Norman, the dresser, is simply not conceived with sufficient depth or truthfulness.

Harwood has a better handle on "Sir"—as his histrionic hero is called, perhaps in ironic recognition that, unlike his real-life model, he will never win a knighthood. Sir is treated as a temperamental, self-dramatizing, plummy old thesp, who seduces his apprentices and manipulates his company and crew. What redeems the old ham is his flamboyant spirit and his love-hate relation-

ship with the stage. When we first meet this disheveled, wandering star, he has collapsed on the street and is now shambling into a provincial theater for his final performance—in *King Lear*, a part he has played over 400 times.

Dazed, inept, his memory dissolving, Sir has to be cajoled into makeup and costume by his dresser, a cheerful, nattering, working-class pouf who prompts him in his lines between sips from a hip flask. Norman functions as Sir's factotum—masseur, valet, nanny, jokester, and memory bank. He is even drawn into service to warn the audience ("Will all those who wish to live—uh, leave") of the air raid in progress. Though at one point Sir begins applying blacking to his face in preparation for playing Othello, he is not so befuddled as to forget his dislike for audiences ("I hate the swine") or for critics ("How can we hate the crippled, the demented?"); and with Norman's unflaggingly good-humored help, he finally makes it on stage, buried in tons of crepe hair, to perform his greatest Lear, despite a catatonic attack before his first entrance. "We've done it, Will Shakespeare, we've done it," he cries elatedly on his final exit, and, following one of his celebrated curtain exhortations ("Our most cherished ambition is to keep what is best alive in the drama"), collapses in the arms of his company.

Sir's death scene, in his dressing room, is less declamatory than his performance as Lear, but no less portentous. He has been at work on an autobiographical memoir called *My Life*, but has only completed the dedication. This is a lordly acknowledgment of everyone in the company, including Shakespeare; Norman, typically, is not mentioned. When Sir expires quietly on his dressing room couch, Norman explodes in rage against "the old sod," but lest this moment of truth betray the obligatory reconciliations, he is also given the chance to pour out his grief ("You think you loved him? What about me?") before cradling his head under the dead man's arm, and singing "The Wind and the Rain," to a counterpoint of sobs from the audience.

There are hints of Fool-Lear parallels throughout the evening, but one hopes against hope the author will have sense enough not to make them explicit. To suggest a correspondence between the most remorseless tragedy ever written and this treacle-drenched artifact is not just presumptuous, it is a serious tacti-

cal error, reminding us how little the author has invented apart from backstage color. *The Dresser* is a drama of failed opportunities, not least of them Mr. Harwood's, who had the knowledge and the experience to tell a true story of the stage, but didn't have the courage. One has only to remember the rages of the actor-hero in the Osborne-Creighton *Epitaph for George Dillon* ("I attract hostility. I seem to be on heat for it. Whenever I step on those boards . . . I know I've got to fight almost every one of those people in the auditorium. Right from the stalls to the gallery, to the Vestal Virgins in the boxes. My God, it's a gladiatorial combat!") to see how this play invokes a condition without ever really investigating it. For all the theatrical chat and internecine rivalries in *The Dresser*, we never discover (as we do so poignantly in O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey*) the true qualities of a "third-rate actor-manager on a tour of the provinces," aside from his rodomontade and self-pity. We don't even learn how a routine actor like Wolfit could sometimes rise to be a great one.

Michael Elliott's production is careful, workmanlike—no more. It has a strong performance from Paul Rogers as Sir; it has a weak one from Tom Courtenay as Norman. Courtenay has reserves of sinewy power which he is not employing here; instead, he settles for a monotonous, punch-line pushing delivery more appropriate to situation comedy. In our culture, the actor's life is indeed tragic (so is the dresser's). Here it is merely an occasion for green-room jokes and bathetic scenes.

CHRISTOPHER Durang's *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You* (Playwrights Horizons) brings us much closer to the truth, not through histrionic posturing, but through savage blistering satire. Durang is the American equivalent of an angry young man, his anger directed less toward social and political targets than toward the nightmares of his own personal history. These include the media, the middle-class family, and most of all, the Catholic Church, whose parochial school system Durang sees as an institutional conspiracy to suppress spontaneity and disseminate lies.

The play takes the form of an illustrated lecture by an aggressively rigid nun; Elizabeth Franz plays her with brilliantly poisonous benignity. She is instructing a group of children—that is to

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say, the audience—about the canonical mysteries of Catholicism, and not since young Stephen Dedalus learned of the evils of self-abuse has there been an address designed to have a more corrosive effect on young minds. Aided in her efforts by seven-year-old Thomas—a boy “with a lovely soprano voice” (“which the Church used to preserve by creating castrati”)—Sister Mary Ignatius embroiders on such appetizing themes as Purgatory (“You can expect to be in Purgatory anywhere from 300 years to 750 billion years”), Limbo (“where unbaptized babies are sent for eternity . . . before Pope John and the Ecumenical Council”), Mortal Sin (“murder, sex outside of marriage, hijacking a plane, masturbation”), and Sodom (every city with a population over 50,000 but especially Amsterdam). Her appetite for hell-fire is exceeded only by her passion for sweets, which she shares with Thomas when the goody two-shoes correctly answers a catechism.

The Sister then accepts questions from the children, some of which she even deigns to answer. The stickiest one is “If God is all powerful, why does he allow evil in the world?” This one she passes by with a glowering look. “Do nuns go to the bathroom?” “Yes.” “Was Jesus effeminate?” “Yes.” (Sadly.) And as her theological coup de grace: “God always answers our prayers. It’s just sometimes He says no.”

Later, she is visited by four former students who—as Joseph, Mary, and the two humps of a camel—enact a Christmas pageant. The players reveal themselves as anti-Sister rebels: a homosexual (“You do that thing that makes Jesus puke?”), a wife-beating alcoholic, an unwed mother, a girl with a history of abortions. It is the latter character, performed with laid-back fury by Polly Draper, who has been nourishing the most hatred for Sister Mary Ignatius and her deceptions. She has seen her mother die, slowly and horribly, of cancer, which left her furious over having been made to believe in anything but the randomness of life. On the day of her mother’s death, she was raped, which resulted in her first abortion; she went to a psychiatrist who seduced her, which resulted in her second. Having murdered her psychiatrist, she has now come to kill Sister Mary Ignatius, realizing it is childish to look for blame, “but basically I think it’s all your fault, Sister.” She expresses the inconsolable and irreconcilable

anger of the disappointed believer.

The play ends in a comic massacre, as the Sister, aided by helpful little Thomas, blasts away at the four rebels with a concealed handgun. The ending has been criticized; I found it entirely appropriate to a work, as much Expressionist nightmare as satiric comedy, which has the Slaughter of the Innocent as its central metaphor. *Sister Mary Ignatius* has been wittily directed by Jerry Zaks on a bill with another short Durang work—

The Actors Nightmare—which I regrettably failed to see (though I know the play in manuscript) through a confusion over the curtain time. I recommend the evening to you warmly. It represents another strong advance in the progress of a singularly courageous satirist, whose pen is dipped in venom and bile, and also in the blood of his own personal wounds. It is a solution of acid ink that cuts to sinew and bone, a rare mixture in a theater usually tinted with colored water.

Johnny Carson vs. the culture of narcissism.

THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

BY MARK CRISPIN MILLER AND KAREN RUNYON

Toward the end of each weekday’s grueling television schedule, NBC throws a little party for the nation’s viewers. This party is always a success, for several reasons. For one thing, it starts late, as a party should: the kid stuff is now off the air, and the kids, having watched all of it, are unconscious. By this time (11:30 p.m., EST), even we grown-ups are starting to go numb, one side-effect of an evening at the tube—the expurgated movies, the lascivious ads, the spectacular duds of “prime time,” the local news, with all its pieties and gore. What we need now is something funny, spontaneous, a little raucous, and this party is just the thing, and a rarity on television: a good hour, among people who really know how to entertain.

“The Tonight Show” has been a hit for so many years that we might tend to take its strengths for granted. Its greatest strength, of course, and the main reason for its longevity, is Johnny Carson, its host since 1962. His success has been, to say the least, unusual. Over the past three decades, countless actors, comics, writers, producers, executives, dogmas, trends, genres, products, and politicians have disappeared down television’s twinkling maw; meanwhile Johnny Carson has not only gotten better as he’s gotten older, but his cha-

risma has remained intact through all those nightly shows.

Unlike our Presidents and other TV stars, Carson seems, despite his fame and power, oddly unassuming. Although his style is unmistakable, he eludes caricature; and his personality, while strong, does not get tedious over time. This seeming plainness, and his formidable wit, have made him the world’s greatest “straight man,” an epithet that could have been coined in his honor. First of all, he is quite *literally* straight, as erect as a man stuck in a tight corset; his famous suits look like they’ve been stamped from sheets of aluminum. (And yet, in his uprightness, he seems entirely at ease.) He is also “straight” in the old colloquial sense, observing the fads and habits of the hip with wry detachment; he’ll joke deftly about sex and drugs, but certainly not as a knowing debauchee. Although he has lived for years in southern California, he still seems as bemused as any provincial visitor, evincing the sobriety of his native Midwest. (And yet his instincts are liberal, his humor often mildly radical.)

This air of propriety has helped Carson to become a great straight man in the usual sense: a comedian sensitive and flexible enough to guide other, more flamboyant talents through improvisation. Joan Rivers, David Steinberg, David Letterman, Steve Martin, George Carlin, and others are at their best in Carson’s company, and yet Car-

son is no mere second fiddler. The qualities that make him an expert partner also make him great when on his own, or when assisted by his straight man, Ed McMahon. He is as good at playing off his audience as he is at keeping his guests on course. Like Jack Benny, he knows how to *react* hilariously. When a joke fails during his monologue, his reaction is usually funny enough to make up for it. He is also an absolute master of the take, able to cause an uproar with one covert glance into the camera.

We've all seen an awful lot of Johnny Carson, who seems entirely at home on television. It is therefore easy not to recognize just how out-of-place he really is, how unlike his counterparts, how foreign to the medium in general. While the shows of Merv Griffin, John Davidson, and Tom Snyder (for example) might differ widely in tone, format, and quality, they are alike in certain timely ways. All of them try to pass themselves off as cozy get-togethers, real encounters between guests and viewers, as if the television apparatus were not involved. The sets look like living rooms, appointed with comfy chairs and throw rugs, and the participants sit *tête-à-tête*, as if un-

watched. In this atmosphere of pseudo-privacy, the hosts will often pump their guests for pseudo-intimacies, easy confessions of weakness, addiction, loneliness, self-doubt (all long since overcome).

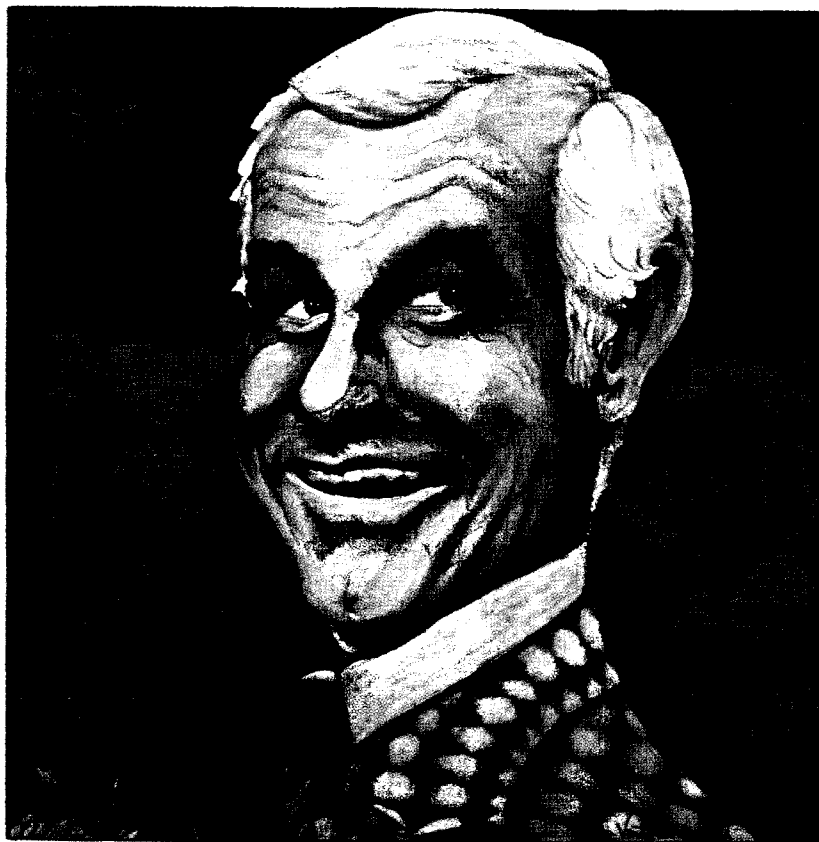
"The Tonight Show," on the other hand, is patently theatrical. The show does not try to conceal the fact that it's a show, but plays it up: Carson faces us from behind his desk, apart from the performers, who sit all in a row, on clear display. This set is obviously on a stage, obviously distanced from the audience; the scenes behind the desk (L.A. at night, a placid lake) are obvious

backdrops, a sort of joke. In such a setting, the guests are not meant to relax and open up, but to perform. Carson is not interested in hearing people whine about themselves, unless they can do it entertainingly, like Rodney Dangerfield or Robert Blake. His show is no place for confession, maudlin reminiscence, therapeutic self-congratulation. Despite its popularity, in other words, "The Tonight Show" is a great anachronism. It carries on the hard old traditions of

sure they can do their best, mingling the art of conversation with the joy of *shtick*.

That atmosphere depends on Carson's manner—his reserve, his tact, his social instincts, those characteristics shared by all great hosts. A public man, he is anomalous on television, whose major figures struggle to seem chummy and sincere. Without losing his self-possession, he can deal with nearly any guest. (He sometimes seems awed by foreign beauties, and gets rattled by those whom he takes for intellectuals. These, however, are the rare exceptions.) It is this very equanimity that makes Carson seem especially sympathetic; without stroking his guests, he can put them at their ease.

His treatment of the studio audience is also curiously old-fashioned, deriving more from night club routines than from the manipulations of TV. "Let me entertain you," is his implicit plea, a request that is both daring and deferential. He avoids the formulas that might guarantee big laughs as certainly as any laugh track, preferring to win the audience anew each night. In other words, he doesn't underestimate his viewers. When he does his political jokes, he's assuming that we



DRAWING OF JOHNNY CARSON BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

show biz, within a culture of facile tears and mechanical "good feelings."

Of course, the world of show biz bears some relation to the culture of narcissism. Those weepy old extroverts with their fragile egos—Shelly Berman, Jerry Lewis, Mickey Rooney—might be regarded as prototypes of the modern narcissist, for whom an audience is less a pleasure than a need. But those ravaged types don't make it on "The Tonight Show," which looks for laughs, not anguish, reflecting on show biz in a jovial, vaudevillian way. Carson and his guests take pleasure in the show's demanding atmosphere. Under such pres-

keep up on the news; his ironies are sometimes too sophisticated, floating high over the heads of the studio audience, disappearing into "TV Land," unappreciated.

Although "The Tonight Show" is very much a part of television (it's taped, edited, interrupted by commercials), its live audience is indispensable. Carson responds to that unpredictable mass, judging his success with the folks at home by gauging the reactions of the folks at hand. This is unusual. On other talk shows, on shows like "That's Incredible" and "Real People," and on those sitcoms "taped before a live audi-

ence," the viewers in the studio are merely a mechanical device, used to make the occasion seem spontaneous. They are also frequently meant to represent ourselves, so that we will see them laughing hard and bouncing in their seats, and immediately start doing the same thing, like a bunch of monkeys. We see them sitting in the audience, watching themselves on the monitors, watching the show on TV just as we are doing at home: theirs is a token presence. Griffin or Davidson or Douglas will talk to these skills, but only to incite frequent outbursts of brainless assent: "Isn't that marvelous?" "I think that's great, don't you?" "I think this country/audience/song/story is great/beautiful/an inspiration!"

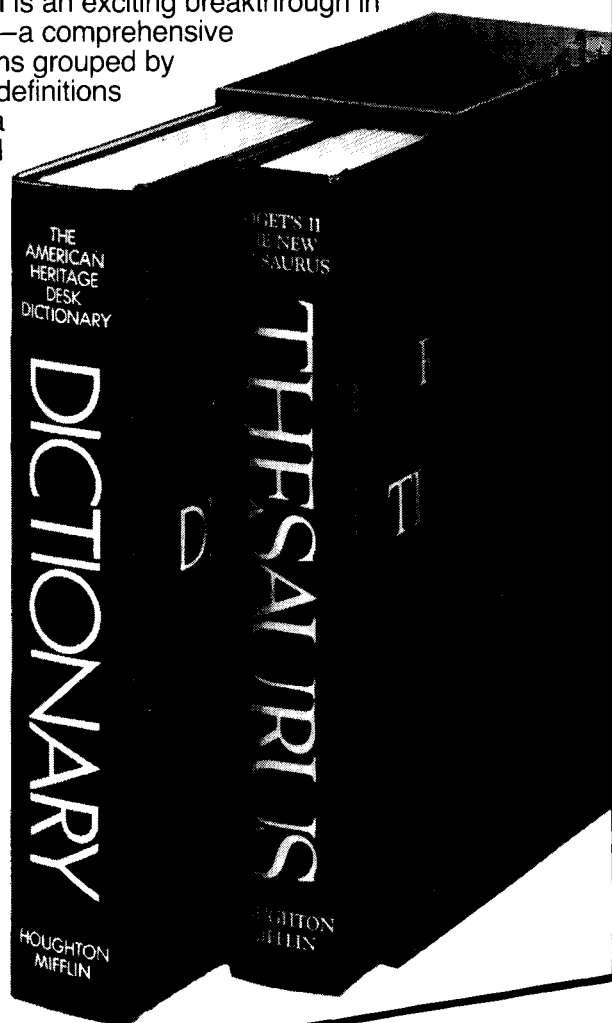
On "The Tonight Show," the live audience functions not as a dummy version of the home audience, but as a vital sampling of that huge constituency. In sparring with those human beings, ad-libbing with cool recklessness, trusting in his sense of fun, Carson does something that is by now completely out-of-fashion. He tries to amuse people, whereas the rest of television pursues a nonexistent supercustomer, the Average Viewer, a vast abstract half-wit assembled by the specialists in "audience research." Because it won't stop chasing this enormous moron, television has become fantastically inane, ignoring the claims of wit, imagination, taste, and common sense to appeal to a mere statistical projection.

Johnny Carson is not pestered by this phantom. He makes his jokes among and about the living, somehow anchoring his humor in the world beyond the picture tube. This rare ability, his reserve, and his conservative temperament make him seem a weighty figure, a man of substance on a ghostly medium. When he comes out on stage each night, Doc Severinsen bows, Ed McMahon salaams (salutations which are only half in jest), and the studio audience rejoices. This deference is partly a response to Carson's stature: he is surely the most powerful man on TV, able to make or break careers, and to name his own salary. But this respect for a great comedian also suggests there is something valuable about comedy itself, that its vitality reflects our own. In the nightly appearances of Johnny Carson, TV has, despite itself, shown signs of life. When he retires, "The Tonight Show" could end up looking like the rest of television, and that wouldn't be funny.

Better to give (bestow, present) and to receive (accept, take).

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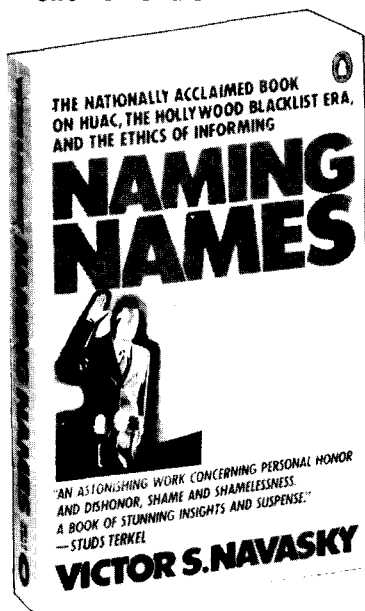
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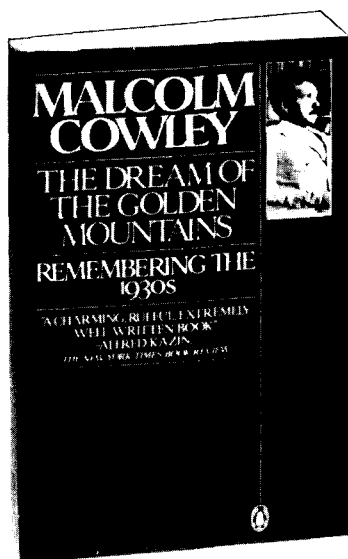
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VICTORIAN VISIONARY

John Ruskin: The Passionate Moralist

by Joan Abse

(Knopf, 347 pp., \$18.50)

The Stones of Venice

by John Ruskin

edited and introduced by Jan Morris

(Little, Brown, 235 pp., \$29.95)

The great Victorians are amazingly elusive, and the present emphasis is upon their paradoxical natures. They are seldom what they appear to be; as we have doubts about the triumphs of our civilization, we discover that those great prophets of Victorian surety were plagued by doubts themselves. But John Ruskin has always been known as a doubter, a challenger who drew the "condition of England" question to the attention of his public. He began by writing about art and architecture, but expanded to include the world in his numerous peculiarly titled works, enshrined in 39 volumes and in many other editions, now practically all out of print—most shamefully John Rosenberg's paperback selection. Those who wish to read Ruskin have to use a library or purchase expensive reprints, or haunt the diminishing number of used-book stores. He is a sage more referred to than read, and his life is so fascinating that it may indeed obscure his complex work. Joan Abse has told that tale in an attractively straightforward fashion, presenting Ruskin sympathetically, accepting of all his eccentricity; in fact at one point she herself suggests in engaging Ruskinian fashion that perhaps there would be less violence and vandalism in city streets if buildings had more ornamentation. Slightly eccentric as this remark may appear, it does emphasize a point which we now recognize and which Ruskin was among the first to bring to our attention—our environment reflects and affects what we are, how we act.

Ruskin was born in the same year as Victoria herself—1819—and died a year before she did, in January 1900. Alive through a good part of the century, he was both an ultimate Victorian and one of the greatest critics of his age. His origins, or rather those of his parents, were modest. His mother and father

were first cousins—which might well be one partial explanation of his bouts of insanity from 1878 on (although his paternal grandfather was moderately mad himself, a business failure, and a suicide). His maternal grandparents were tavern keepers in Croydon, outside of London. His father began as a lowly clerk in the sherry importing business, and made a fortune from it during that prosperous time when fortunes could be made quickly. John, an only child and the center of his parents' existence, never needed to work. His only financial worries were the consequence of his fondness for art collecting, his investments in his social schemes, and his belief that one should not keep unearned money. As he knew, his life as a railer against society was made possible by the wealth acquired by the 19th-century British bourgeoisie.

This biography is a valuable life of a fascinating man. Abse successfully balances the personal story and the serious accomplishments of a long and complicated life. Ruskin is an intriguing "case study" of the sexual repression of the 19th century. His life makes clear how intensely sexual the century was. Indeed, the 19th-century preoccupation with sex extended to almost all aspects of existence; and it's no wonder it's been said that Victorians believed that dining table legs needed to be covered—the contemplation of them in the nude might have triggered orgasms.

The young Ruskin lived a sheltered life, yet at the same time he was exposed to a wide range of experiences. His father so adored his wife and son that he took them with him on his selling trips, both in England and abroad. Ruskin saw far more of the world than other children. He was educated largely at home, until he went to the most fashionable of Oxford colleges—Christ Church—and then not as an ordinary

student but as a "gentleman-commoner" so that he associated incongruously with wordly young swells. His mother came to live in Oxford so that he wouldn't be on his own! She wanted him to be a preacher, in the evangelical tradition, and dedicate his life to God. In preparation for that calling, and as a good Victorian, he knew his Bible well, and it shaped his extraordinarily rich prose. He transferred his religious zeal to the world of aesthetics. He was a figure of the second generation: his father made the money so that his son could lead the life of a gentleman.

THE CULMINATION of his sheltered upbringing was his marriage, at the age of 29, to Effie Grey, age 20. After a disastrous wedding night, they decided to wait to consummate their marriage until she was 25. Six years later their marriage was annulled on the grounds of Ruskin's impotence. (Effie married John Everett Millais, the painter championed by Ruskin, who had caught him in a spirited portrait painted in 1853 by a stream in Scotland while Millais and Effie were falling in love.) It has long been said that Ruskin, whose ideas of women were formed by art, was put off by discovering that Effie had pubic hair. But that seems an unlikely explanation for the disaster of their marriage and Abse does not give it too much credence. The open annulment of the marriage meant that the Victorian public could have a lovely prurient time at the expense of Ruskin. All through his life he was violently attracted to pubescent girls, most intensely to Rose La Touche—an improbable name for a perfectly respectable young girl whom he wished to marry, having met her when she was nine. He was an active financial supporter and visitor to the Winnington school for girls, and he adored teaching other young girls near his home in the Lake District. He was also intensely involved with older women as surrogate mothers, most notably his cousin, Joan Severn. He and "Doanie" wrote to one another in rather embarrassing baby talk.

Sexuality was at the heart of his being. He wrote to some of his women correspondents, in a barely disguised way, that he was far from "pure" in thought or in his indulgence in "self-gratification." Abse depicts his sexual drive as low; I suspect the contrary, even though it did not take a traditional

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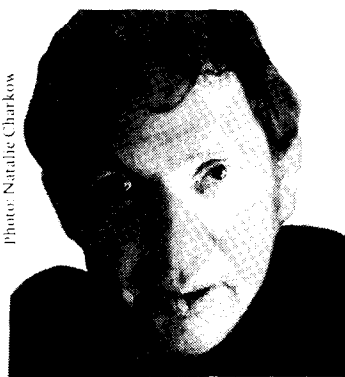


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form. He was obsessed with young girls, and devoted much energy to being, and corresponding, with them.

His parents, however, succeeded in keeping him with them a good part of the time until their own deaths. His mother did not have her wish that he be a preacher of God; his strict evangelical faith evaporated into a vague deism. Yet he did become a prophet and preacher, pleasing her; his father was gratified by his fame. But they paid the price for their excessive solicitude when he finally turned upon them and wrote appallingly frank letters to them about how they had ruined his life.

Fascinating as this story is, Abse does not allow it to obscure Ruskin's greater accomplishments as a writer. He first emerged, quite young, as a champion of the paintings of Turner, making him the central figure in the volumes of *Modern Painters* (1843-1860). Ruskin was a moralist; art was to enrich life, but he was far from being simpleminded about it. He did not champion the anecdotal paintings that were the greatest successes of the century. With Turner

and the Pre-Raphaelites, he took up the cause of the controversial. When the art world did not follow his lead, and attacked the Pre-Raphaelites, he began to feel that something was wrong with society itself, that it needed reforming. In the English tradition of Tory radicalism, he called himself both a Tory of the old school and the reddest of the red, believing in the radical transformation of society so that it could fulfill its traditional obligations in a hierarchical way.

Ruskin became a profound subversive of the society which had made him, and gave him the means to inveigh against it. The crucial turning point was, somewhat improbably, the volumes of *The Stones of Venice*, begun shortly after his marriage. He and Effie arrived

in Venice a few months after the Venetian rising of 1848 had been crushed by the Austrians. While Effie flirted with the Austrian officers, Ruskin spent his time obsessively exploring and measuring the city. The first volume was published in 1851, and the second and third in 1853. Jan Morris has edited, with an introductory essay setting both Ruskin and Venice in context, a selection of the larger work, interestingly illustrated by drawings by Ruskin, and both old and

through prouder eminence to less pitied destruction.

Venice was destroyed by the opulence, the exultation of the individual, the errors of the Renaissance, and the tendency toward sham, a point Ruskin makes by contrasting the tomb of Tomaso Mocenigo of 1424 with that of Andrea Vendramin, who died in 1478. About the latter, Ruskin discovered on personal inspection that the parts that

can't be seen were not done. In the course of the book the Gothic style is held up as the great art form—most famously in the chapter "The Nature of Gothic" which William Morris called, when he reprinted it as a book for the Kelmscott Press, "one of the very few necessary and inevitable utterances of the century."

In the same year that the first volume of *The Stones of Venice* was published, the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace celebrated the triumphs of British materialism, the ability of its bourgeoisie to buy objects of scari-fying ugliness representing hours of wasted work. In that case, work was to

glorify the wealth of the purchaser. In "The Nature of Gothic" Ruskin argued that the crucial consideration was rather the pleasure of the worker. He became more and more socially active, pointing out the dangers of England's decline because of its failure to make work satisfactory for the worker. It was a message that was grasped by the middle class, even if it didn't change its way of life, appreciated in the innumerable Ruskin reading circles, and endorsed more actively by the working class and its leaders, in their elevation of Ruskin as one of the intellectual founders of the Labour movement. Gandhi and Cecil Rhodes heard the message when they listened to Ruskin lecture as Slade Professor of Art at Oxford. Ruskin



PHOTOGRAPH OF JOHN RUSKIN FROM 'JOHN RUSKIN: THE PASSIONATE MORALIST'

new photographs. The flavor of the whole is retained, with its juxtaposition of detailed description with a discussion of the moral implications of architecture, but nothing much is said about how the selection was made, where the sections came from, what is omitted. It is a casual enterprise. Nonetheless, the framework is here, and Ruskin's message is clear in the opening lines:

Since first the dominion of men was asserted over the ocean, three thrones, of mark beyond all others, have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice, and England. Of the First of these great powers only the memory remains; of the Second, the ruin; the Third, which inherits their greatness, if it forget their example, may be led

himself translated his idea into practice rather comically when he had a reading circle for the Irish workmen building the Oxford Museum of Natural History, and organized Oxford students, including Oscar Wilde, to repair the road in Ferry Hinksey, outside of Oxford. A transformation of lives did not—perhaps could not—happen. Gothic buildings were built in England, but without the significance for those who built and used them that Ruskin felt had been true in the past. The Bradford millionaires listened to Ruskin denouncing them for worshipping the gospel of getting on, but did not transform their lives. Nonetheless Ruskin increased for many their self-consciousness of the price paid for England's greatness.

There is a moment in E. M. Forster's *Howard's End* when the poor clerk, Leonard Bast, who had been trying to improve himself, has been reading Ruskin and wonders if a sentence from *Stones of Venice* can be used in a letter to his brother. "Let us consider a little each of these characters in succession; . . . and first, what is very peculiar to this church, its luminousness." This is comparatively straightforward style for Ruskin. Even so Forster believes that Leonard cannot use this language—he cannot afford to participate in the spirit of English prose, and hence he should write about his flat that it "is dark as well as stuffy" rather than "Let us consider a little each of these characters in succession, . . . and first what is very peculiar to this flat—its obscurity." Forster tended to be pessimistic about what might happen to the Leonard Basts of the world—the working and lower middle-classes. Ruskin was a more universal genius, and through the complications of his life and his multifarious writings, he preached a broader message: society might be transformed, not only in its art and architecture, but also in more fundamental ways. To be reminded of his life story is salutary, and to be offered a selection from his combination of huge guidebook and moral tract is useful. Taken together, both books bring before us his eccentric yet central genius.

PETER STANSKY

Peter Stansky teaches at Stanford University and is at work on a study of William Morris.

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PREWAR DIPLOMACY IN EUROPE

Germany and the Two World Wars

by Andreas Hillgruber

translated by William C. Kirby

(Harvard University Press, 144 pp., \$14.50)

The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Starting World War II, 1937-1939

by Gerhard L. Weinberg

(University of Chicago Press, 728 pp., \$44)

Economic Diplomacy and the Origins of the Second World War: Germany, Britain, France, and Eastern Europe, 1930-1939

by David E. Kaiser

(Princeton University Press, 346 pp., \$25, \$12.50 paper)

On a Field of Red: The Communist International and the Coming of World War II

by Anthony Cave Brown and Charles B. MacDonald

(Putnam's, 718 pp., \$19.95)

On August 22, 1939, when it became known that Joachim von Ribbentrop was flying to Moscow to sign a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, the British government felt it necessary to point out that this would in no way weaken its resolve to defend Poland against German attack. A note to the British ambassador in Berlin for delivery to Hitler said plainly:

It has been alleged that, if His Majesty's Government had made their position more clear in 1914, the great catastrophe would have been avoided. Whether or not there is any force in that allegation, His Majesty's Government are resolved that on this occasion there shall be no such tragic misunderstanding.

Whether such a warning would in fact have made any difference in 1914 is doubtful. In his brief reconstruction of the events of that time, Andreas Hillgruber, ordinarius for modern history at the University of Cologne, points out that the immediate causes of World War I were rooted in the fact that Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's policy of calculated risk, which was designed to improve the Balkan position of the Central Powers at Russia's expense, and which might have succeeded if

Bethmann-Hollweg had been given enough time, was overborne by the German High Command, which insisted upon activating its operational plans at once. Since at least 1906, these plans had assumed, and depreciated the effect of, a British intervention; and it is not, therefore, likely that a last-minute telegram would have held the soldiers back. Even so, the British were criticized for their silence, and in 1939 they opted for clarity rather than ambiguity. They were no more successful this time. Since 1933 Adolf Hitler's foreign and domestic policy had been based on the idea of a future war; by 1939 he was sure that the time had come to launch it, and he was no longer amenable to warnings or appeals to reason.

In the last 20 years there have been attempts to diminish Hitler's responsibility for the coming of World War II. In 1961, in a book published in Germany under the title *Der erzwungene Krieg* (*The Forced War*), David L. Hoggan advanced the implausible thesis (made doubly so by his curious way of using evidence) that the war had been the result of the machinations of Colonel Joseph Beck of Poland and the British Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax. In 1962, in a brilliant

but often willful study, A. J. P. Taylor argued that Hitler had no long-range plans of any kind, that there was no connection between what was written in *Mein Kampf* and the events of the late 1930s, and that the war resulted from a series of accidents. And, more recently, David Irving has been urging us, in the teeth of the facts, to believe that Hitler's ideological motives for war did not exist, since he was opposed to the liquidation of the Jews.

Professor Hillgruber and Gerhard Weinberg make short shrift of these notions. The former, Germany's leading student of Hitler's political and military strategy, emphasizes the extent to which the Führer's thinking was determined by the experience of World War I and by his determination to resume Ludendorff's effort to make Germany a world power by breaking out of the continental straitjacket in which it was confined by its geographical position. This was to be accomplished by setting up an empire that would control all of Europe, with a solid economic and strategical power-base in the vast eastern reaches of the continent in which a complete transformation along racial lines would be effected by the total extermination of the European Jews. Once this was completed, Hillgruber believes, Hitler intended to make Germany a world power through the acquisition of a colonial realm in Africa and the building of a strong Atlantic-based battle fleet.

THAT EVEN the first phase of this program could not be accomplished without war was clear to Hitler. His strategy was to avoid it as long as possible, so that Germany would be prepared when it finally came. Professor Hillgruber quotes from a speech to the German press by Joseph Goebbels on May 5, 1940, in which the propaganda minister said:

In 1933 a French premier ought to have said (and if I had been French premier I would have said it): 'The new Reich Chancellor is the man who wrote *Mein Kampf*, which says this and that. This man cannot be tolerated in our vicinity. Either he disappears or we march!' But they didn't do it. They left us alone and let us slip through the risky zone, and we were able to sail around all dangerous reefs. And when we were done, and well armed, better than they, then they started the war.

Hitler was enabled to gather and consolidate his strength by the distractions

caused by the world depression, the reluctance of the other powers to accept the burdens that would have been necessary if he were to be stopped, and his own diplomatic skill. It was the latter that persuaded potential antagonists that his demands were reasonable and limited to Germany's prewar boundaries and that, if they were granted, he would become a law-abiding citizen. But by 1938 he had become tired of diplomacy and anxious to see the tanks begin to roll, and in 1939 (Goebbels to the contrary notwithstanding) it was he who started the war that was meant to inaugurate his program of expansion.

How he did this is the subject of the second installment of Gerhard Weinberg's magisterial study of Hitler's foreign policy, a work so exhaustive in its use of source materials that it will not easily be superseded. Weinberg meticulously documents Hitler's mounting determination, as his rearmament program progressed, to resort to war—"After all," he was to say after his wish was gratified, "I didn't raise the army in order *not* to use it"—and in his excellent account of the Sudeten crisis of 1938 he

points out that even the completeness of the Führer's triumph at the Munich Conference left him angry and frustrated, since his real objective had been the destruction of Czechoslovakia. He had held back from war, partly because of the doubts of his advisers and allies and the lack of any public enthusiasm for a military adventure, but more perhaps because the complete capitulation of the Western powers to his demands had robbed him of any pretext for war. He was resolved that this would not happen again and, during the Polish crisis of 1939, he cut off regular diplomatic intercourse in order to make attempts at mediation impossible and thereby forced the issue, despite the defection of Mussolini and the disturbing insistence of the British and French upon honoring their pledge to Poland. In a last effort to shake Western firmness, he postponed the planned attack on August 25. But, Weinberg writes, this "left him all the firmer in an almost hysterical fixation to attack a few days later. . . . Without war, his whole program and his whole life made no sense to him." He was doubtless influenced

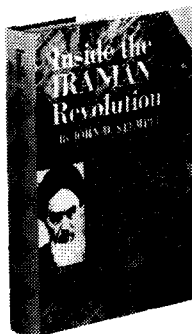
by his fear of an early death (he had already had a cancer scare in 1938) and his identification of Germany's fate and future with his own. He had repeatedly talked to confidants of his preference for going to war when he was 50, rather than 55 or 60, and he now satisfied it.

In contrast to some previous writers on the origins of World War II, Professor Weinberg is curiously uncritical of Neville Chamberlain and, indeed, often leaves the impression that there was no essential difference between his response to the German threat and that of the Foreign Office and his first Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden. If this were so, it would be hard to explain Winston Churchill's anguish and the archappeaser Nevile Henderson's satisfaction when they learned of Eden's resignation. Chamberlain's arrogant self-assurance, his myopic belief that the Führer could be appeased, which was not entirely shaken even after the German invasion of rump Czechoslovakia in March 1939, was surely almost as important a cause of the war as Hitler's own obsessed fixation upon conflict.

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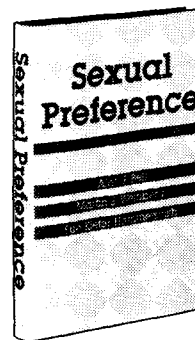
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So, however, was another Western weakness that is the subject of David Kaiser's informative book on economic diplomacy in Eastern Europe: the decision, taken during the depression years, to allow economic considerations to take precedence over basic principles of foreign policy that were vital to future security. In 1931 and 1932, by abandoning free trade and concluding the Ottawa Agreement (of which Neville Chamberlain, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was one of the principal architects), the British government made a conscious decision to stimulate domestic and empire production at the expense of trade with foreign countries. The consequences of this were foreseen in a Foreign Office memorandum of December 1931, which argued that the new policy "implied a measure of dissociation from Europe, a corresponding diminution of our influence over European affairs,

and possibly a growth of economic nationalism"; but the policy was nevertheless adhered to during the decade that followed and was implemented by restrictions upon European imports and by stubborn resistance to clearing agreements that might have facilitated trade with East European countries with managed currencies. With a singular disregard for its East European allies, the French government followed the British example, with tariff and quota policies that favored the French empire over foreign markets.

In contrast, Mr. Kaiser points out, the Germans effected a skillful penetration of the markets of Eastern Europe by means of currency arrangements and the exports of arms in return for foodstuffs and raw materials, a trade that not only kept the German people well fed until the war began but also protected the German arms industry from the dangers of overproduction and stagnation.

The threat of a German hegemony in Eastern Europe was recognized by officials in the Western foreign offices. As early as 1936, René Massigli, the political director of the Quai d'Orsay, warned his superiors that,

already dependent on the Reich economically, Central and Eastern Europe is now menaced by its military influence. Having begun its intensive rearmament, Germany can offer arms in payment of its commercial debts. By doing so, she can also keep her arms factories running and improve her own matériel.

In 1938 E. M. B. Ingram, head of the Southern Department of the British Foreign Office, argued the need for a more aggressive commercial and foreign policy in Eastern Europe, pointing out that it had "always been the traditional policy of His Majesty's Government to prevent one Power from attaining a predominant position on the Continent" and that it was important "to convince the countries involved that they are not completely abandoned by the Western Powers and

that the latter still offer them a loophole of resistance to the German stranglehold which they dread."

These protests were unavailing. British and French commercial policy was subject to so many diverse departmental pressures that Foreign Office opinion would have been given a hearing only if the political leaders had supported it, and in the days when Chamberlain was British Prime Minister and Georges Bonnet Foreign Minister of France this was not the case. Ingram was ignored, and Massigli lost his post after Munich, and the West forfeited a chance not only to shore up France's faltering alliances in Eastern Europe but also to stimulate their own rearmament effort by competing in the arms trade with the Germans. The political events of the 1930s mirrored the economic ones, and it is no exaggeration to say that the West's militant posture in 1939 might have been more convincing if Britain and France had not, for the preceding decade, ignored the principle of the European balance of power.

THE ROLE of the Soviet Union in the coming of the war in 1939 is still difficult to unriddle, since the records of the politburo and the Soviet foreign office are not available to scholars. Anthony Cave Brown and Charles MacDonald's *On a Field of Red* is not very helpful in suggesting answers since, despite its subtitle, it has little to say about the origins of World War II but is rather an overblown and unsystematic account of the activities of the Comintern since its founding in 1919. Even so, this long catalogue of Communist intrigue and subversion serves to remind us of how unreliable a factor the Soviet Union was in the calculations of Western statesmen in the 1930s and how reluctant they were to include it in their plans to contain Hitler. On March 26, 1939, Neville Chamberlain wrote,

I must confess to the most profound distrust of Russia. I have no belief whatever in her ability to maintain an effective offensive, even if she wanted to. And I distrust her motives, which seem to me to have little connection with our ideas of liberty, and to be concerned only with getting everyone by the ears.

When those words were written, preparations for a Nazi-Soviet rapprochement had already been under way for six months. As Hillgruber writes, "A separate treaty with Hitler appeared to Stalin the most suitable

THE GARDENER

So thick a summer man as one
of snow, he stands stock-still
in the garden

and startles me, as I pass
on the dusty street, with
his odd murmuring. I see

bare feet, drooping belly,
torn pants, for an instant
stare into dull eyes,

then quickly look away,
too late to erase the shock
of that moist mouth,

as if I'd touched
an alien life that might
reach out and know me

against my will. But his hands
placed the strings where morning glories
scale like reckless lovers,

his breath inspires the trumpets
of the yellow squash, the strawberries'
red-toothed mesh.

And isn't it towards him
the sunflower's great insect eye
turns, over the chicken-wire fence,
for counsel, for radiance?

CELIA GILBERT

WARTIME DIPLOMACY IN THE PACIFIC

Akira Iriye's new study of the Pacific phase of World War II, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941-45* (Harvard University Press, \$22, \$9.95 paper), reflects the changing fashions in the writing of American diplomatic history. The revisionist challenge, which began with William Appleman Williams's influential and provocative 1959 book, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, gradually degenerated into the doctrinaire economic determinism of Gabriel Kolko's *The Roots of American Foreign Policy* (1969). The heated debate over the origins of the cold war which raged during the Vietnam conflict ended with the post-revisionist studies of John Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (1972), and Daniel Yergin, *The Shattered Peace* (1977). These authors successfully fused elements of both revisionist and orthodox interpretations to conclude that the cold war, far from being the sole responsibility of either the United States or the Soviet Union, was in fact an inevitable outgrowth of World War II.

Iriye, a University of Chicago historian noted for his earlier studies of U.S.-East Asian relations, substitutes an emphasis on cultural factors for the revisionists' preoccupation with economic motivation. Harking back to the multiarchival advice of Samuel Flagg Bemis, he believes that foreign policy reflects the entire culture of a nation, not just the political views of its leaders.

The emphasis on culture enables Iriye to portray the two antagonists in the Pacific War in a wholly new light. Instead of seeing them as diametrically opposed countries locked in a struggle for survival, Iriye finds the United States and Japan surprisingly similar in their approaches to the underlying issues of World War II—the future of China, the questions of independence for the colonial peoples of Asia, and the postwar fate of the Pacific islands. Using pan-Asian rhetoric, Japan was bent on establishing a classic sphere of influ-

ence over the entire continent, reducing China and the former European colonies to subservience to Tokyo. The United States, despite the necessary gesture to self-determination in the Atlantic Charter, never planned to liberate the peoples of Asia. Instead, American policy at most contemplated trusteeships for former colonial areas while insisting on U.S. domination of the Pacific islands and a reformed Japan. Thus, in the face of intense Asian pressure for national freedom and independence, both Japan and the United States were determined to impose traditional great power solutions.

In the course of his study, Iriye shows the convergence of American and Japanese policies as the war forced Japan to give up its goal of Asian supremacy. The eventual surrender of Japan and its reshaping along conservative, democratic lines was foreseen and even welcomed by many Japanese leaders, who helped transform military defeat into a veiled triumph for their views. It is uncanny to see how the ideas and suggestions of American diplomatic experts on Japan, particularly Joseph Grew and Hugh Borton, coincide with the advice being given to the emperor in 1945 by Konoe Fumimaro and Yoshida Shigeru. The bi-national focus, in the hands of an historian as skilled as Iriye, frees diplomatic history of its traditional patriotic bias and produces a truly international perspective.

Yet unfortunately Iriye's book promises more than it achieves. His definition of culture, "a consciousness of common tradition; the sharing of religious, artistic, and literary roots; and informal mechanisms such as customs, ways of life and a myriad of symbols," raises hopes of a broad interpretation that will examine the domestic forces and influences that determine a nation's foreign policy. His account, however, relies on the traditional diplomatic documents—notes, diary entries, committee minutes, and memoranda of conversations. There is no attempt to examine novels and plays, no analysis of propaganda, no study of symbolism. The reader searches in vain for the sources of Japanese fanaticism, as displayed by the Kamikaze pilots or the suicide pacts of Japanese soldiers on

the Pacific islands. Nor does Iriye probe deeply into American culture to analyze the impact of racism on such tragic events as the bombing of Pearl Harbor, where Americans badly underestimated Japanese ingenuity, or of Hiroshima, with its evident disdain for Oriental life.

In reality, Iriye's book is long on power and short on culture. Despite his broad definition of culture, he focuses exclusively on the formal diplomatic views of the Japanese leaders. He finds that they looked at the world essentially in what he calls "power-political" terms. Despite their very different cultural tradition, the Japanese leaders were followers of Machiavelli and Clausewitz, intent on carving out a Japanese sphere of influence in Asia to replace the European imperialist one. Japanese policy toward China, Russia, and the United States did not reflect any deep-seated forces growing out of Japanese history and tradition; rather, it expressed familiar balance-of-power concerns. Similarly, American policymakers, while always speaking the language of Wilsonian idealism, were equally intent on establishing American control of the Pacific and post-war Japan. Thus power considerations prevailed in both nations, overcoming the cultural differences that Iriye never explores.

This new cultural approach to diplomatic history, proposed but not fulfilled in Iriye's book, offers a more exciting and more constructive way of analyzing past foreign policy. The fundamental premise of the new cultural approach to diplomatic history, that a nation's external policy reflects its distinctive cultural, artistic, and historical traditions, is sound. What is needed is both the bi-national focus Iriye develops so well and a careful attention to the way in which the shared customs of a nation influence its view of the world. Diplomatic historians could then transcend their current narrow concern with economic and strategic factors and reveal the underlying cultural dynamics of international relations.

ROBERT A. DIVINE

Robert A. Divine is the author most recently of *Eisenhower and the Cold War* (Oxford University Press).

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means of avoiding an Anglo-German arrangement that in Soviet eyes could only be directed against the Soviet Union." Once concluded, the Hitler-Stalin pact made war inevitable by freeing Hitler of any concern about the Soviet attitude when he attacked Poland and then turned toward the West; and the onset of hostilities in turn brought two important benefits to the Soviet Union: enhanced strategical security by the acquisition of a broad buffer zone in Eastern Europe, and relief from the fear of a two-front war in Europe and Asia, since the new situation made it expedient for the Japanese to accept defeat in the battles along the Manchurian-Mongolian border that had been raging since May 1939.

Thus common advantage united Hitler and Stalin in August 1939, and the European war was the natural consequence. But the benefits accruing to the

dictators were of short duration. Hitler had not abandoned his dream of conquering an immense empire in the East, and his exasperation over Great Britain's refusal to surrender led him in June 1941 to launch the attack upon the Soviet Union that Stalin thought he had managed to stave off for an indefinite period. The attack marked the beginning of the broadening of the European conflict to a world war, which destroyed the Third Reich and came close to doing the same to its accomplice of 1939.

GORDON A. CRAIG

Gordon A. Craig is J. E. Wallace Sterling Professor of Humanities Emeritus at Stanford University and the president-elect of the American Historical Association.

THE FALL OF A STAR

Poppa John
by Larry Woiwode

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 204 pp., \$10.95)

Larry Woiwode's first novel, *What I'm Going to Do, I think* (1969), established him as a master at portraying life as most of us know it—subtle, complicated, sometimes mystifying, seldom dramatic or conclusive. Not once, in chronicling the near-claustrophobic existence of a newly married couple in a wilderness cabin, did he reach for a startling event; yet he held his readers to the end by sheer craftsmanship. Details accumulated to tell us more than we'd first suspected. The delicate balance of feeling between the two characters kept us riveted; we held our breaths, fearing something would teeter too far.

His second novel, *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* (1975), had much in common with a fondly preserved scrapbook. Snippets of memories, lists, diaries, and letters combined to give us a deeply moving history of a family. Again, there was a sense of density and abundance, along with respect for the tiny increments by which real-life stories evolve.

Now we have *Poppa John*, and it's something of a surprise. Woiwode's

third novel differs from his first two in any number of ways. For one thing, the style has changed, becoming more involved and convoluted, less direct. The book as a whole is shorter and leaner, more confined in its scope. Where the first two books sprawled, ranging both wide and deep, this one keeps to a single path and a single purpose. Even its time span is unusually brief, with the major action occurring in the space of a day.

The characters, too, seem confined. Their concerns are narrower, although they lead lives of far greater sophistication than did the people in the first two novels. Ned and his wife, Celia, are New Yorkers in their late 60s. For 12 years Ned, an actor, has played the role of a sage, advice-giving old soap opera character known as Poppa John. By now, he is Poppa John, and is called that even by his wife, even by himself in many of his thoughts.

Imagine, then, his feelings when Poppa John "dies"—his life ended, at least on TV, by one of those unnamed, painless diseases so popular in sentimental

dramas. More people watch his death, we're told, than watched Kennedy's funeral; traffic comes to a halt in cities all across the nation. This is a little hard to believe, and it seems peculiar that any producer with a shred of business sense would terminate a character so popular; but never mind. The point is that the off-screen Poppa John, stripped of his role, finds himself at loose ends. When we meet him, he's been out of work for several months, with no immediate prospects, and it's nearly Christmas and he and Celia are rapidly depleting their savings.

The situation is an affecting one, with all it implies about the pain of coming to grips with one's own death. And there are some good insights into the relationship between actors and the characters they play. Ned has taken Poppa John far beyond the stick figure written into the earliest scripts. He has fleshed the old man out—added some of Ned's grandfather's moral uprightness, given him a penchant for quoting Bible verses. But then Poppa John, in turn, has fleshed Ned out, for better or worse. Ned now reads the Bible constantly, and his apartment is full of biblical texts and concordances. He has become so

reflective in his everyday activities that his wife often loses patience. ("Just decide, Poppa John," she tells him. "Not another silent meditation on the moral history of man. Shall we take a cab or a subway?") Even his social behavior is influenced:

Stepping out of the apartment into the street, he was never sure which side of himself to assume, and so would slip into Poppa John, since the chances were good he'd meet somebody who knew him. . . . In every conversation he kept maneuvering behind his listening pose to come up with counsel for the moment, along with a verse or two from the Bible for support, which was also practice for the show; and after a year or two of this, both on the air and off, his language started taking on a fussy and archaic, semi-mystical cast, undercut by an old man's broad salvos at humor (for true wit, which he, however, had in his everyday life, he felt, or he wouldn't be sane, takes a delicate, contemporaneous tuning), which was Poppa John to the bones.

But the passage quoted above, in addition to showing a major theme of this book, also demonstrates one of its flaws. That parenthesized aside—"for true wit . . ." and so on, with its many, many commas—renders an already long sen-

tence virtually unreadable. It stops the reader in his tracks, ruins the rhythm, requires at least one rehashing. (Let's see, now. If I interpret "true wit" to be the subject of a whole separate sentence, and not merely the object of a preposition as I had first assumed. . . .)

One or two such lapses would be forgivable, but there are dozens. Sentences cover a third of a page or more, often beginning in mid-phrase. They twist and drone and meander so that we have to blink, shake off our confusion, sit up straighter and go back to the beginning. For instance:

Or worse, once outside the studios, Poppa John a species of parasite, feeding off his feelings and memory and research and experience, with no perception of the limits of its host, and growing every day (a thrilling inner glimpse of Hydra-headed worms with multiple eyes circling with increasing speed across a tender section of his intestines to find a way out, causing a crazy-bone sensation in the pit of his stomach) with Poppa John's apparent need to placate or bring under control every person that came within his ken.

I felt, at times, as if I were struggling with a foreign language of which I

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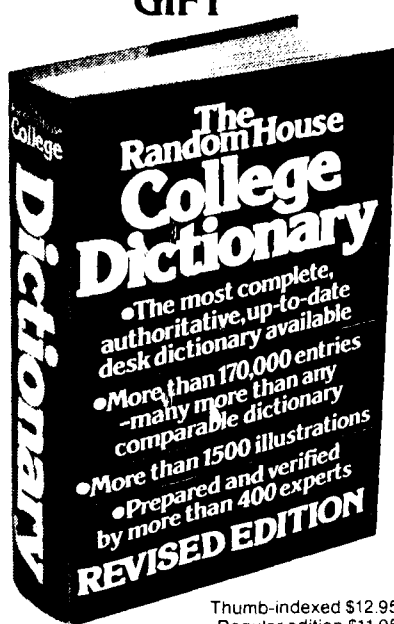
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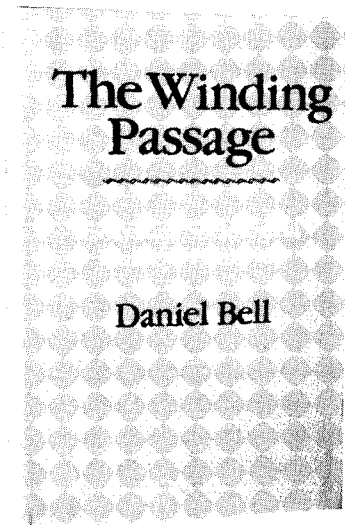
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knew only smatterings—a few concrete words here and there that I tried to piece into something meaningful. Slogging my way through a thick, doughy paragraph, I picked out the nuts and raisins and left the rest on the plate. Gradually, I realized that certain events had slipped right past me. Was I reading too late in the evening? I switched to daytime. No improvement: I still had to read every page at least twice before I understood what was happening.

It's possible, of course, that this effect is deliberate—that it's a graphic illustration of the rambling, pedantic inner workings of a troubled old man. But if so, it's *too* graphic. Surely Woiwode doesn't want us nodding off altogether.

Moreover, we're less likely to make the effort when the old man is so tedious. His dry stuffiness and pretentiousness exist for a reason, literarily speaking—he's meant to come face to face with himself by the end of the book—but these qualities are so perva-

sive that we find it difficult to stay with him. And there's no one else to hold our sympathies. Celia is a loving, supportive wife, but she's barely sketched in. Even the world that Poppa John moves through seems insubstantial, almost a caricature. When he accidentally enters a revolving-door compartment occupied by a glamorous young woman, she glares and asks, "Is this how you old jokers get your kicks?" A stranger whom he nearly bumps into says, "Easy, Gramps." It's a cartoon world, too obvious, lacking the undertones and gentle shading that Larry Woiwode knows how to do so well.

That he does know how, in fact, is the reason for the truculence of this review. I *know* he knows how; I've read *What I'm Going to Do*, *I think* and *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*. I believe I'll go read them again, and wait with undiminished hope for his next novel.

ANNE TYLER

SAGA OF A SOUTHERN FAMILY

The Hammonds of Redcliffe
edited by Carol Bleser

(Oxford University Press, 422 pp., \$19.95)

This remarkable set of letters involving four generations of a South Carolina planter family constitutes one of the most interesting documents ever to come out of the Old South. It is stunningly dramatic; it reads like good fiction. For different reasons, William Faulkner and Margaret Mitchell would have been fascinated with it.

The Hammond family lived in a home called "Redcliffe" on the banks of the Savannah River near Augusta, Georgia. The only member of the family of any historical importance was the patriarch, James Henry Hammond, who in 1858 declared in the Senate of the United States that "you dare not make war on cotton. No power on earth dares to make war on it. Cotton is king." But it is not for his stormy role in antebellum political history that he figures in this volume. As head of an unusual and articulate family he plays his part in a selection of letters that, chosen not for their historical significance but for the

human drama of the story, read like installments of an epistolary novel.

A man of much intelligence and ferocious passion, James Henry Hammond is appropriately described by the editor of these letters, Carol Bleser, as "a tough son of a bitch." Following an early success in politics he wooed and won the affections of a Charleston heiress, despite the objection by her family that he was obviously a fortune hunter. Inheriting considerable property through the marriage, Hammond built himself a vast and profitable plantation empire; at one time he owned 14,000 acres of land and 330 slaves.

In 1842 he was chosen Governor of South Carolina, but his political career ended abruptly several years later when he was discovered to be in the habit of taking far too many physical liberties with the four daughters of his brother-in-law, Wade Hampton II—apparently all at the same time. Faced with the threat of a horsewhipping and public dis-

closure, Hammond left the capitol at Columbia for home, where he soon took up with a slave girl. This caused his wife to decamp for Charleston with the children, not to return until the mistress was—temporarily at least—put aside.

It was not until 1857 that he returned to public life, was chosen U.S. Senator, and subsequently delivered his famous "cotton is king" speech, in which he advanced his theory that all high civilizations required a class of "mudsills" to do the menial work. When South Carolina seceded he returned to Redcliffe. There he operated his plantations and wrote long letters to his brother and to his friend William Gilmore Simms, the novelist, raging at the unfairness of fate, the ingratitude of the state, the stupidity of the Confederate government, and the failure of his own sons to be "well educated and well bred independent South Carolina Country Gentlemen the nearest to noblemen of any possible in America." He died, raging, in 1864.

HIS WIFE, incredibly, stuck by him, and his children, for all the humiliation he sometimes caused them, seemed to love him. The oldest of his sons, Harry, is the most attractive and admirable of all the male Hammonds. Of gentle, unassuming temperament, by his father's standards a failure in everything he undertook, he married, served through the Civil War as a quartermaster officer in the Army of Northern Virginia, then came home to take up the burden of the plantation. By disposition, inclination, and training he should have been a scholar, but circumstances forbade that, so he tended to the land, working long and hard, raising his family. Though he considered himself mostly a failure he was in every way the husband and father that his own father had failed to be.

His letters to his wife and children are marked by an unfailing patience and kindness, and by a psychological insight that is sometimes remarkable. He understood his two daughters, Katherine and Julia, very well, and was an abiding source of strength to them. Katherine rightly wrote to her mother in 1893, from Baltimore where she was a student nurse at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, that "there is more in Father than all the other men I ever knew. I believe he is far greater man than his Father was—and he would have shown it if he had had half the chance that Grand-

father had." Though toward the end of his long life—he died in 1916—he grew petulant and sometimes even irascible, Harry Hammond was, ironically, what his father had hoped for, without knowing what the term really signified: a well-bred country gentleman. His letters are perhaps the finest in this book.

The two daughters were unusual people. Julia, the elder, was sent to Harvard Annex in 1881 to prepare for future medical studies. The encounter of a rural Southern girl with Cambridge and Boston is fascinating to read. She stayed only for a term; she missed her parents and home too keenly. In the 1890s she fell in love with a widower, but declined to marry him because she would have to leave home. A little later she changed her mind, but in the meantime he had decided upon somebody else. Thereafter she wrote intensely passionate, unmailed letters to him for some years. Not until 1911, when she was in her 50s and both her former lover and, significantly, her mother were dead, did she marry, living thereafter happily, though in increasing poverty, until her death in 1935.

The other daughter, Katherine, was

beautiful, flirtatious, and exceedingly strong-willed. Playing the field, she declined the proposals of one eligible young man after another. Her only real love seems to have been for an impecunious and tubercular young Philadelphian, who was regretfully put aside while she was in Baltimore in favor of a young resident physician, John Sedgwick Billings of New York City. After she gave up her nursing studies and returned home, Billings pursued her to Redcliffe, won her hand, and they were married in 1897.

It was not a happy marriage. Billings, became a fashionable physician in New York. Katherine made frequent and lengthy trips home; she did not like apartment dwelling. Later Billings took to philandering, became involved in a notorious alienation-of-affection suit, and then conducted a lengthy affair with a nurse in his employ. Katherine had two children, James Henry Hammond Billings, who achieved considerable renown as an artist, and John Shaw Billings II, a journalist who rose to high estate in the Luce empire.

It was John Shaw II who saved Redcliffe. Always strongly drawn to his

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mother's home and family as a child, he was able in the 1930s to buy the old house and restore it to its onetime glory. In 1954 he resigned his job as editorial director of all publications of Time Inc. and moved to Redcliffe for good. Before his death in 1975 he arranged to donate the estate and the voluminous family records he had assembled to the state of South Carolina.

It is the extreme articulateness of all the correspondents that makes this selection of four generations of family letters so memorable. To a man—and woman—they wrote with great clarity and intensity, expressing themselves without reserve and with entire candor. At times it is almost as if the Thomas Sutpen of Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*

had possessed the language and learning to say what was on his mind, and his heirs had survived and told their story. Almost every stereotyped description of what 19th-century Southerners were like is compromised by the revelations of personality contained in the letters. The female Hammonds are especially memorable; students of the role of women in the plantation South will have a field day with them.

The volume contains 182 items, chosen from among some 7,000 manuscripts; apparently no Hammond ever discarded a letter, however personal and even compromising. A different selection might have produced a work of more political and economic significance, but the editor, Carol Bleser, has concentrated on the story line, and with great skill. I predict that *The Hammonds of Redcliffe* will become the basis for a multi-part television series on the order of *Roots* and *Poldark*. Its foremost appeal is in the very human family chronicle it offers. In this respect it surpasses any other such collection of American correspondence that I have ever read.

LOUIS D. RUBIN JR.

Louis D. Rubin Jr. is author and editor of some 30 books on Southern literature and history. His new novel, *Surfaces of a Diamond*, has just been published by Louisiana State University Press.

TRB, from page 4

ditures is filled with tables listing what some 141 nations (NATO, Warsaw Pact, and unaligned) spend both for arms and for civilian goals. Did you know that Albania has only 2.7 physicians per 1,000 people, and only 27 teachers, but 41 soldiers? The radio the other day told of a party of U.S. businessmen going to Japan to see why productivity is so high there. It didn't mention one factor that leaps out from *WMSE*. The United States is spending 6 percent of its gross national product for the military; Japan only 1 percent. America is running the capitalist race with a handicap. America's annual productivity growth is below 3 percent, and declining; Japan's is an amazing 8 percent. There are other factors, too, of course, but nobody can fail to see the contrast.

The Soviet Union has the poorest productivity record of any big country. Its ratio of military expenditures is higher than the West's (perhaps twice as high), and, if CIA observations are correct, its productivity turned from a plus in the 1960s to a minus in the 1970s: its output per worker actually declined. (Just the other day Brezhnev said civilian productivity was his biggest problem.)

Here are some odds and ends from *WSME*'s challenging comparisons. On its own scale of "economic-social standing" it ranks the U.S. seventh from the top among 141 nations and the USSR 23rd. (The scale includes infant mortality, life expectancy, percentage of population with safe water, literacy, and the like.) The richest fifth of the world population lives 22 years longer on average than the poorest fifth. A fierce military competition denudes civilian industries of engineers and technicians, and as the arms race deepens consumer prices rise.

In a foreword to the study George F. Kennan gloomily says that unless present trends are checked "it is impossible to see any outcomes other than catastrophic ones." The facts about what is happening must be made accessible to as wide a circle as possible, he says, and "nowhere is this better done" than in the annual Ruth Sivard volumes from the nonprofit group. Kennan, too, sees a change. Public anxiety is "growing importantly." Perhaps the people themselves, he suggests, are finally going to force a change. The world was never in greater peril.

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CORRESPONDENCE, from page 7

thumping bigots and flag-burning fanatics of the immoral minority. Pity.

Second comment: Morton Kondracke's piece on El Salvador from the Venezuelan viewpoint was excellent ("The Venezuelan Heresy"). Please work for this kind of balance in all your political essays. It does wonders for the conservative who wanders through your pages, cup in hand, looking for a wee drop of compassionate understanding of the way things really are.

Duncan B. Parsons
Mt. Sidney, Virginia

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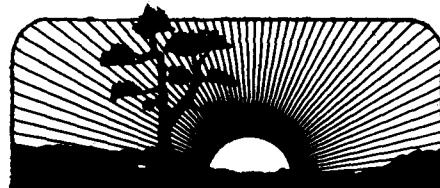
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WASHINGTON DIARIST

All Wet

IN WHAT I initially thought was a droll *New York Times* op-ed piece placed by mistake in the editorial column, Jack Rosenthal discusses the cultural implications of the recently installed sushi bar at the Harvard Club of New York City. Contending that for some time we have been experiencing a Japanese cultural invasion, the "Notebook" points out that the signs in Times Square that "used to flash Camel . . . , and Planters Peanuts, and Maxwell House" now flash names like Panasonic, Sony, Seiko, and Fuji. It then solemnly claims that the "presence of a sushi bar at the Harvard Club suggests something more than tolerating Japanese manufactures. . . . In a small way, it signals a new cultural convergence." Given the scope of the editorial, "small" is still a gross overstatement. Times Square is at Broadway and West 44th Street. The Harvard Club is on West 44th near Fifth Avenue. The *New York Times* is on West 43rd near Sixth. Now, even if the sushi bar in question had been installed at the Princeton Club (15 West 43rd), the Century Club (7 West 43rd), the New York Yacht Club (37 West 44th), or the very distant Yale Club (near West 45th and Madison), the horizon on which this cultural convergence is seen is even narrower than Steinberg's view of the world from west Manhattan. And to note what happens at the Harvard Club is not exactly to have one's finger on the national pulse. Claiming that what has happened at the club is "not an isolated example," the editorial cites the rise in Japanese restaurants all over Manhattan. But the proliferation of sushi bars can be attributed to causes other than the current faddish mystique that surrounds all things Japanese. They are relatively inexpensive and offer food that is high in protein, low in carbohydrates, interesting, and not too filling. They also provide perhaps the only comfortable and dignified setting in which to eat alone, which is another thing you'll see a lot more of in Manhattan than almost anywhere else, especially between 44th and 42nd on the West Side.

OUR RECENT infatuation with Japanese management has made us familiar with concepts like Theory Z. Because I have just now taken the plunge into night school, I have learned about Theories X

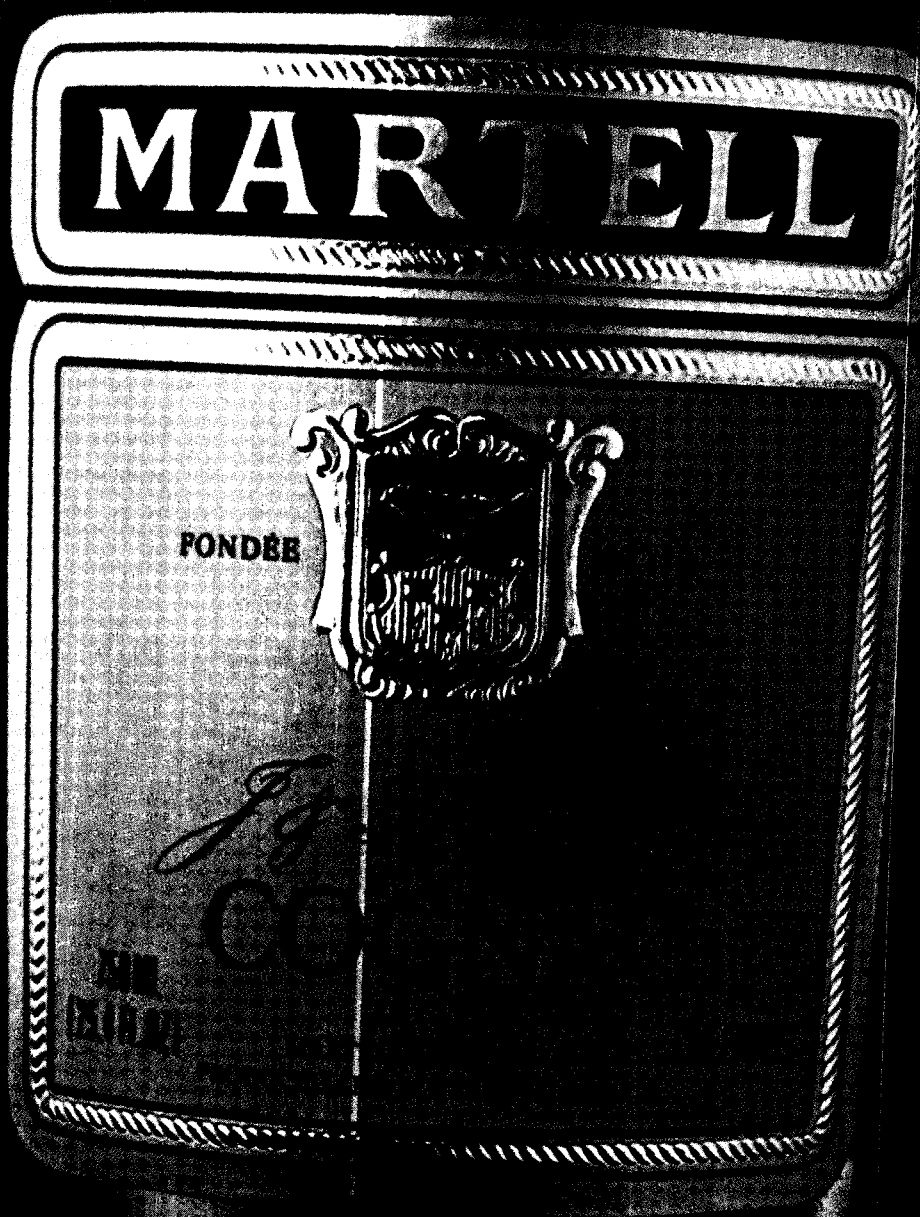
and Y, which are the formulations of one Douglas MacGregor in *The Human Side of Enterprise*, a classic book about management published more than 20 years ago. MacGregor claims that the prevalent style of management rests upon a system of assumptions about human nature that he terms Theory X: that on the whole people are lazy, avoid responsibility, would prefer not to work, and would rather follow than lead. Progressive managers and those who keep up with the latest research must, MacGregor claims, begin to subscribe to Theory Y, which is based upon a system of opposite assumptions. I expected to have some trouble adapting to coursework again, but I didn't expect to have the terrible time I did with the argument of this book, which is, after all, not so revolutionary anymore. It was when I had to write a critical reaction that my difficulties with it became clear: I didn't subscribe to Theory Y's rosier assumptions about human nature. Beyond the fact that in the context of the course this meant I wasn't "manager material," this revelation made me unhappy. During the week before the next class I took special note of the work people did in various organizational settings. I endured a cranky and inept supermarket cashier that evening. I made 26 fruitless phone calls (including one at 5:30 a.m., one at midnight, and one that lasted for more than 30 minutes) to Amtrak, whose new answering system, "Arrow," played for me every piece of easy-listening music Arthur Fiedler ever conducted. One of my credit card accounts was erroneously closed. I received a third bill (with interest added) from the D.C. government for taxes I paid last year. I saw two commercials, one in which a wine "critic" claimed the superiority of Gallo wine and another in which a housewife swore that a cake baked by a New York restaurant's pastry chef was inferior to one made with a Duncan Hines mix. And then on the way to my class I had to sit on a bus whose driver, several stops down the road, wordlessly and apparently without cause stopped and refused to drive for 25 minutes. If, as novelist Stanley Elkin has written, "Life is the conversion of the individual," I may still be won over to Theory Y. Then again, I may not be cut out for business management. But perhaps

theories of business management aren't cut out for most people, either.

ARE WE SHAPED by those facets of our culture in which we don't even participate? I've never had a Big Mac and therefore never a Big Mac attack; I've never seen *Star Wars* and thus the Force has passed me by. But lately I've been experiencing something I can only describe as "visual hunger"; I get this craving, vaguely behind my eyes, for images on large screens, movies, visual entertainment. And this seems odd to me because I'm not a vidiot (technically, "video idiot," but basically any TV, movie, or video games freak) and, although I find video cassette stores alluring, I still have only a nine-inch black-and-white TV and no plans to buy video equipment. I feel as if I'm being affected by the video revolution even though I'm not buying into it. Wondering why, I remembered a passage in Dickens's *Dombey and Son* in which a character describes what the landscape looks like from a train; trains being new technology then, the perception is novel. Just as one's first view of the world from an airplane changes one's perception of the world forever, every new bit of technology, whether experienced directly or vicariously, seems to give one a new eye for things. In the past few weeks I have read a detailed account of the building of a microcomputer; shopped alongside punk rockers and exquisitely made-up new romantics; browsed through a very odd magazine called *Wet*; was forced to listen to music a friend called "new wave"; read a spacey novel I didn't like entitled *Easy Travel to Other Planets* (in which a lady makes love to a dolphin), which critic James Wolcott called "new-wavish"; and I went to the Ritz, a Manhattan night spot where a huge-screen disjointed video show is part of the evening's entertainment. Though life usually seems frustratingly static, I imagine I change imperceptibly every time I encounter culture in some new form of technology or art. So maybe the vague hunger I occasionally feel now for visual entertainment isn't baseless. To some extent the way we look out on the world is conditioned by the ways in which the world induces us or forces us to look.

M.G.

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